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GAMES

INTERNATIONAL

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UPFRONT

QUE SERA

It will not have escaped your attention that the number of general games emanating from the US and UK markets has dwindled to a virtual trickle. Indeed, were it not for Germany we would have been hard pressed to fill the pages in that section. The other option would have been more trips down memory lane. We are, therefore, not being unduly pessimistic when we say that the UK and US games market are in severe decline. This situation naturally affects this magazine. Without products to sustain it, the hobby will simply atrophy. Likewise this magazine. Clearly we are not at this point yet, but we intend to act sooner rather than later.

Accordingly, this will be the last issue of *Games International* in its present form. In September we will launch a new magazine, *Gamer*. The emphasis here will be on computer games of the type we already cover. Before you start looking for a rent-a-curse to inflict on our editorial team, we should say that we will still be devoting almost as much space to board-

games as we do at present. In addition, we will be introducing 32 pages of colour. Needless to say, all current subscriptions will be honoured.

The reasons for this change, as we have pointed out, are commercial. However, we also believe that there is a definite need for the type of magazine we are planning. The most common criticism we hear is that there are so many computer game mags on the market. This is indeed true. Mostly, though, they are competing for the same market: namely, subliterate under 16s. Our contention is that the games have grown up, and so have the players. Unfortunately the press has stayed put. Most of our reviewers play computer games, but ask them to name a worthwhile magazine on the subject and the only title which crops up is the *American* magazine, *Computer Gaming World*.

By attracting a new and different type of readership, we hope to give the boardgames industry a boost. After all, many of our new readers will probably be startled to learn that boardgames consist of more than *Monopoly* clones. And, you can play with human opponents.

With *Games International*, we think we succeeded in introducing a new gener-

ation of games to the hobby in a way that was both stylish and witty. The time has come, though, to move on. In a perfect world there would be no distinction between different forms of games. There would simply be games. This is the message *Gamer* intends to preach. Stay with us and get converted. GI

ISSUE SIXTEEN

What a month! The only thing we were scraping the barrel for were new superlatives: *March Madness*, *Murphy*, *Modern Naval Battles II*, *Nuclear War*, 'IT' and 'IT II' each clocked up good scores, while *Adel Verpflichtet* and the magnificent *Railroad Tycoon* both obtained the perfect figure and entry into the hallowed Hall.

All this and a letter from The UK's Leading Authority on Board Games. What more could a reader want? Not a review from Philip 'It came from Northern Ireland' Murphy surely? Well, like it or not that's what you get as the old bogtrotter jumps on his chariot and rides into *Römer*. His compatriot, the Reverend John Scott, has been complaining that the excellent games he's been receiving keep him away from his flock (it's God's will, John). It seems that 'The Reviewing Rev', as he's known around here, has been having a great time with *It Came From The Desert* and its sequel. We trust the title in no way refers to our great maker. Popular capitalists, if there are still any left, can check out the stock market from the financial safety of our pages as we provide a definitive guide to shocks and scares.

Finally we are proud to present a design feature by Bruce Shelley, co-designer of the aforementioned *Railroad Tycoon*. Bruce, probably more than anyone, was the man responsible for 1830 turning out the way it did when he developed the game for Avalon Hill, though he'd be the last person to say this. Together with Sid Meier, he looks to have created something to surpass even that achievement. Both in the article and in the game manual, Bruce generously acknowledges the influence of 1830. Let's hope that this helps to generate some crossover success (both ways) so that each game gets the recognition they deserve. GI



GA ME S

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REVIEWS

GENERAL | GAMES

GAME OF THE MONTH

ADEL VERPFLICHTET

DESIGNED BY
KLAUS TEUBER

PUBLISHED BY
F X SCHMID

PRICE £19.95

RATING: 10

The almost surrealist box art gives a clue to the subject matter contained therein,

and also some indication of the game's originality. In French the translation of the title is *noblesse oblige*. In English, it's *Adel Verpflichtet*. Like it or not.

The somewhat improbable theme of this game concerns an eccentric group of collectors who focus their attentions on various *objets d'art*. These gentlemen have a wager to see who can acquire the best collection, by visiting various castles and auction rooms, and then be first back to the dinner table at their club. As such a rascal you will have in your employ a detective and two thieves. The game is afoot.

ART FOUNDATION

Each turn is divided into two phases, each with its own sub phase. Players must decide to go to the auction or go to the castle. You go to the auction to either bid for an item to add to your collection (you start with four), or to half inch some cash. Each player starts off with 50 000 made up of four 'cheques', but cunningly they are all in different denominations. When at the auction cards are revealed simultaneously, highest bid takes the item. If a thief goes to the auction, then he immediately takes the cash. If more than one thief goes, then they take nothing, and of course if all players at the auction send thieves there is no money to steal, so effectively a turn has been wasted.

Things are even trickier at the castle. Once there you have three choices: exhibit, send the tea leaf, or dispatch the

gumshoe. Showing off your collection will enable you to move around the board, provided it's good enough. But beware! If some rotter has sent in the tea leaf then you could find yourself missing Johnny Weissmuller's jockstrap (one of the items in the game). Instead of exhibiting, you could send your detective who'll feel the collar of any villain that's present. Your reward for such a ploy is to progress further towards your destination, plus, the tea leaf is dispatched instantly to the nick where he remains until (topically) overcrowding forces his release. The downside of sending in your 'tec is that if there is nobody to nick then you've wasted a turn.

The essence of all this interplay is that old gaming standby – bluff. The difference between this and recent releases such as *Counter Intelligence* and *Karawane* is the amount of information available. This enables you to make a partially informed decision, rather than just guess. At the end of the day though, like so many great games, you must know your opponents, for it is against them you are competing, not the game itself. And believe me, this is a great game in every respect. The way players are split into two groups on each turn and then forced to compete again, is simple, yet ingenious. The movement system is both extremely clever and original. All the elements associated with games, such as money management, memory, and bluff are all effortlessly factored in to form a cohesive whole. To top it off the production is absolutely top class: beautiful artwork, top quality card stock, and a first class board. The danger, of course, in eulogising in this way is that expectations raised can seldom be equalled, let alone exceeded. After all, we're talking about a game that lasts less than an hour. The purists will no doubt howl like a wounded wolf. They would prefer to wait until a game was dead and buried before singing its praises. Play now, die later is our motto. Game of the Month? Make that Game of the Year, no mistake.

Brian Walker

Available from Just Games and our mail order service.



MARCH MADNESS

DESIGNED BY
RICHARD WINTER, BOB TOOLE
AND STEVE THOMPSON

PUBLISHED BY
AVALON HILL

PRICE £19.95

1 TO 4 PLAYERS

RATING: 9



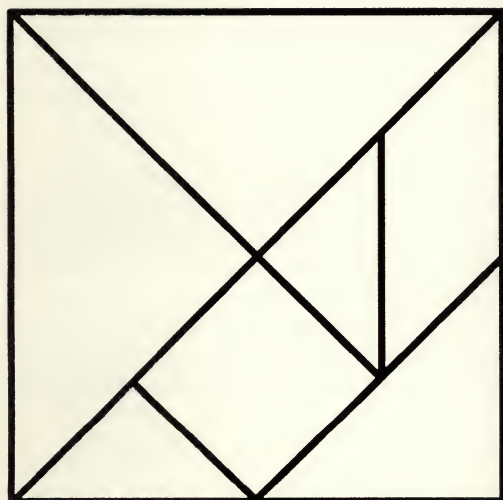
perhaps pushes it even further into the outer limits of planet esoterica. Maybe one should say 'games', for what you have here is a couplet.

A LOAD OF BALLS

The basic game system is so simple, it's amazing no one thought of it before, especially given the dearth of good soccer games – a sport to which the game mechanics would be eminently convertible ('On our way to Wembley'). The board resembles a 64 place tournament schedule, onto which are placed the team markers provided. Not that they are likely to mean much to most readers of this magazine, unless there are some Carolina

Gamecocks *et al* supporters among you. In the four player version, each player receives 16 colour coded teams of various, though in total equal, seeding. After choosing which match to play, there then follows a massive bout of die rolling. But this is no 'you roll a six and win' game. The results of the six dice thrown are modified by your seeding and by 'event' chits – five of these are drawn randomly at the start of the tournament and can be added to after each match, the number drawn being dependent on the result. The first half score is important in that it determines who places event chits first for the second half. After observing this, his opponent may then decide how many chits he wants to place. This is an important

Incredible as it may seem, only one Avalon Hill game has been featured in this particular section of the magazine since issue #2. So, then, welcome **March Madness** to the rich tapestry that emanates from the unlikely port of Baltimore USA. Given basketball's less than major sport status in the UK, it should be made clear than you don't have to be a fan to enjoy this game. If you are, though, it helps. The particular aspect of the sport on which the game focuses is college basketball, which



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decision, as your sixteen teams (initially) will all be screaming for your chits. It's a good game of skill and die rolling, and a fun way to fill ninety minutes. What is really needed, though, like any sports game, is something which enables you to identify with a particular team: the guys that you suffer for every weekend. Perhaps AH could be persuaded to print some soccer markers; failing that, make your own.

CLOCKING OFF

The advanced game is a different basket case altogether. Here we find dice combined with a super sophisticated card game. Realistically this is a two player game, as only one match can be resolved at once unless you're the ostentatious type who bought two copies of the game.

In this version, seedings are ignored. Say hullo instead to 'power ratings'. These determine whether or not you are the underdog. This rating appears on a sort of compounded 'stats' card representing your team. The result here is determined by the play of strategy cards which are drawn at the start of a match.

The clock is a ubiquitous object but one which has not made that many appearances in games. Here it makes up for that in a big way (don't say it's about time) as **March Madness** simulates the importance of the countdown quite ingeniously; when the die roll exceeds the time remaining, then scoring for *both* sides must be resolved in the position on the strategy display that corresponds to the result of the *white* die roll. Time outs are covered by the simple expedient of a reroll. The

strategy display is really the key to the game. This contains four positions, plus the bench. Strategy cards are played onto these positions, and a half ends when each position has been resolved. Scoring is calculated through a matrix of player stats for the position being resolved, die roll, and strategy card modifiers. The rules for the advanced game require a bit of study, but they are all there. They also provide useful hints on the playing of strategy cards and generally unravelling the arcania. As with any card game, it's important to understand what the cards *do*, irrespective of the subject matter. Two fine games in one, then. Don't worry if you, like me, can't tell a basketball from a banana. This game is a great way to start learning.

Brian Walker

COVER UP

DESIGNER UNKNOWN

PUBLISHED BY
MANIK GAMES

PRICE £5.99

2 TO 4 PLAYERS

RATING: 7

It is said that you should not judge a book by its cover. Similarly you should not judge a game by its box. The box lid states that **Cover Up** is 'An exciting detective game for two to four players'. Clever artwork depicts the title in the shape of a pistol firing a bullet. There is also the outline of a body with three bullet holes, a magnifying glass and footprints. Only

the last have any bearing on the game. Even the illustration and description on the bottom of the box does nothing to indicate the real facts about the game. What we find on opening the box are two deductive games on to which a detective theme has been loosely hung.

Having said all that, the games themselves are extremely good, well thought out and certainly worth further consideration.

The board, which forms part of the box, consists of a 6 by 6 squared grid with black and white footprints on alternate squares, checkerboard fashion. There is a pack of 12 square cards, each containing a 3 by 3 grid, the squares being the same size as those on the board. However, the squares on the cards contain a black or white footprint or a hole. When these cards are placed on the board, the footprint printed there can be seen through the hole. The cards contain between two and five holes in a variety of patterns.

This is all the equipment that is required to play the first game. This is for two players, although the rules state that four players can play in teams of two. The cards are shuffled and dealt face down to each player. The first player takes the top card from his pile, looks at it and places it face up on the board. The second player does likewise and this continues until all the cards have been placed. Cards can partially or completely cover cards already laid but not placed underneath them. Sounds simple: but what is the objective? Well, the idea is that one player plays black, the other white and the object is to have more of your footprints exposed

at the end of the game. This involves considerable thought and often it is necessary to cover your own colour in order to keep others exposed through the holes. Unfortunately as you only know which card you can play at the beginning of your turn, it is not possible to plan ahead, so there is some luck in the card that you draw. Nevertheless it makes for an interesting, tactical game. I thought that there might be some advantage in placing the last card, but this doesn't appear to be the case. Each game that we played ended in a score of 19 to 17.

The second game is for four players. The box contains four, large character cards; the white detective, Justin Case; Inspector Claude Clouesse the black detective; Herr Lipp Schticke the white killer and Gori Nockemov the black killer. These cards are shuffled one is dealt, face down, to each player to indicate which character



Det. JUSTIN CASE
THE WHITE STEP DETECTIVE



GORI NOCKEMOV
THE BLACK STEP KILLER



Insp. **CLAUDE CLOULESSE**
THE BLACK STEP DETECTIVE

The detectives must try to discover the square on which his coloured killer has hidden the body; that is, the white detective's opponent is the white killer.

The twelve square cards are shuffled and placed face down near the board. In turn, the killers take the top card and place it face up on the board in a similar fashion to the first game. However, when placing a card, the colour and direction of the footprints on the two selected squares must not be changed. Each detective has a note pad, which is a miniature version of the game board, to mark off those squares which change in colour and/or direction. Eventually the detectives should be able to deduce the location of the body. Before a detective announces his discovery, each killer must have placed an equal number of cards on the board. The first detective to locate the body of his killer's victim is the winner. The other killer also wins for successfully keeping his square secret. There is plenty of opportunity for the killers to 'grass' on each other by changing as many of his opponent's steps as possible and so help the detective.

With three players, one detective attempts to discover both locations. What we have with **Cover Up** is two quick, fun



Herr. **LIPP SCHTICKE**
THE WHITE STEP KILLER

games which require thought in placing the cards in order to win. My only real complaint is the lack of colour. All the components are black and white; even a coloured background to the board would improve presentation. Nevertheless I would recommend this game, especially at the price.

John Humphries

they will represent during the game. Each killer chooses one square on the board, which is supposed to be where the bodies are hidden. The rows of squares on the board are identified by street names: Tight Corner, Mean Street and so on, while the rows are identified by buildings such as Station and Cinema. Thus the killers identify their chosen squares by name such as Café, Skid Row. The killers must reveal their selected locations to each other. It is suggested that they are written down to save any arguments later.



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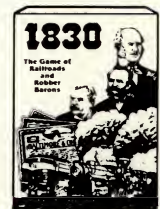
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RÖMER

DESIGNED BY
RUDOLF ROSS

PUBLISHED BY
HEXAGAMES

PRICE £8.95

2 TO 4 PLAYERS

RATING: 5

Römer (The Romans) is a card game based (very loosely indeed) on chariot racing. The object of the game is to form a 'chariot' with six 'horses' attached rather than to race. When one player completes his chariot the round ends, all players score up and, if no one has reached the 500 points needed to win, another round is played.

The deck consists of 105 cards in five suits (blue, green, grey, pink and yellow) of 21 double value cards, the values on the cards are 'Fighting' – used in the Whist aspect of the game – and 'Scoring' – used, surprisingly, for scoring. Two suits come in three sets of seven: Set A is all 'Caesars' (double zeros); Set B consists of Fighting values 1 to 7 and Scoring value 3; Set C has Fighting values 1 to 7 with 1 to 4 Scoring 5, 5 and 6 Scoring 10 and 7 scoring 20.

BEN WHO?

Each player starts each round with fifteen cards, one of which he places face up in front of him as his chariot. This card's colour also indicates that player's personal trump for that round of play. Usually the players will select four different personal trumps.

Each player, during the course of the game, attempts to form a team of six horses in front of this chariot before any other player can do likewise. The backs of all the cards depict a horse so one is just placing face down cards at the table. Eventually one player will complete the task and at this point everyone scores for their chariot and horses. Each card scores its Scoring value but is multiplied by its position if (and only if) it is one of that player's trump suit. Thus the chariot's Scoring value is multiplied by one (it's always a trump!), the first horse by two (if it's a trump), the second horse by three (if it's a trump) and so on. The maximum score from a single card is 140, achieved by laying down your Scoring value 20 trump card as your sixth horse ($20 \times 7 = 140$).



On his turn, a player may either lay down a horse and replace his card from the draw stack, or lead a card to a trick. It is this latter action which is the meat of the game. Tricks are rather unusual in that a player does *not* have to follow suit. However, if he doesn't, then neither does he replace the card played to the trick, thus reducing his hand of cards. Also, a player may elect to trump a trick with a card of his personal trump. In this case, *only* he, as winner of the trick, gets to replace his card, regardless of the other players' actions. A good ploy, you may think, except that you need your trump cards to lay down as horses if you want a decent score. You also need your trumps in case someone leads them, for if you fail to follow suit when your personal trump is lead not only do you not replace your card, you also forfeit your last horse to the trick winner's horse team, diminishing your hand and chariot simultaneously!

That, basically, is the game. There are a number of fine details I haven't touched on but the above describes the game adequately. Sadly, the game plays that way too – adequately. After two or three rounds one quickly realises that if one player gets four horses down and another three, it is almost impossible to stop one of them from laying down six horses. So, for the next two or three rounds, one concentrates on hitting hard anyone who lays a third horse by constantly leading their trump. While doing this, one quickly realises that a player who fails to replace a few cards in his hand finds it tremendously difficult to defend the cards he has left. Now the game degenerates totally into a simple case of trying to push the other players onto the slippery slope to

oblivion without getting pushed yourself. Chariot building becomes a wholly forgotten activity since once you've eliminated the other players you can just lay down a team of horses unhampered.

CIRCUS PONDEROUS

The aggressive style of play (which seems to be the only working defence to *any* style of play) means that a lot of tricks are played and the group goes through the deck at least twice. Consequently, the ability to withstand a concerted attack from the other players depends on fortuitous dipping from the draw stack, and thus one might as well choose one's personal trump (an apparently crucial decision) at random. My group's experience with the game seems to suggest that while tactics are easy to decide upon (and usually a tad obvious) strategic decision are impossible to make, relying as one must, on cards from the draw stack.

That's not to say the game is *all* luck, nor that it's not fun. There's a certain amount of skill required in the play of the cards and there's *always* the opportunity to launch mindless revenge attacks on the Swami (*What's so mindless about that? – Ed*) Römer won't lie gathering dust in my cupboard; we'll play it now and again as a filler at the start of the evening while we're waiting for Alan ('Olympic Torch' – like the torch, he never goes out) to turn up, but a classic this is not.

Philip A Murphy

Römer is available from Just Games, or from our mail order service.

FIDCHELL

RECONSTRUCTED BY
NIGEL SUCKLING, FROM A
TRADITIONAL DESIGN

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QUINTESSENTIAL GAMES

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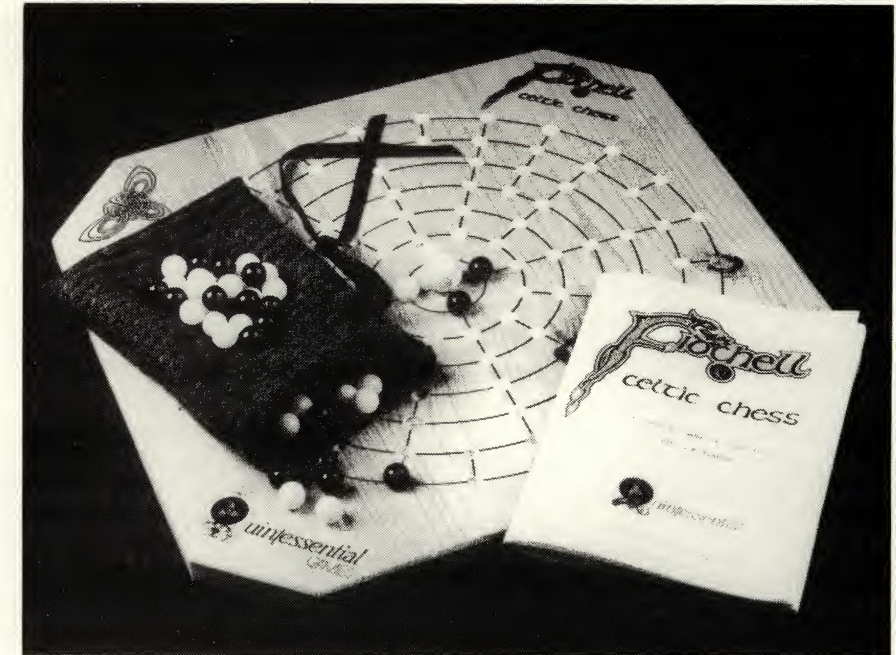
2 TO 4 PLAYERS

RATING: 6

Fidchell (or **Fichaell**), also known as **Celtic Chess**, or **Gwyddbwyll**, as it is called in Wales, is a game that all serious researchers have heard of, but few can spell and even fewer can pronounce.

The game is believed to have died out about 1000AD. Like so many ancient games, there are a number of intriguing references to it in the literature of the time, but the rules go unrecorded. What seems certain however is that **Fidchell** was an abstract game for two player.

Now Quintessential Games have marketed a version reconstructed from available evidence, plus healthy lashings of imagination, by Nigel Suckling. This approach to an ancient 'lost' game is not of



course without precedent: the Egyptian game of Senet is a popular subject for romancers (see for example **Netherworld**, quoted in the June issue of *Games International*).

The rule book offers two games, a starter version and **Fidchell** proper. Also (plus mark from me!) advice on tactics which enables beginners to manoeuvre meaningfully from the outset. However, most of the rule book is taken up with a

detailed description of how the inventor arrived at his interpretation of the game. At times the author's reasoning requires a mental leap or two, but nevertheless this is one of the best written and best argued game storylines that I've come across. Articulate games inventors are a rare breed.

The game is played in two phases. In the first phase, the board is dressed (starting position) when each player adds a man to any vacant space until all 55 men are on

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the board. In the second phase, men are moved over any number of vacant points in a straight line, a move equating to that of the rook in chess. This sequence of first playing men onto the board and then moving them is of course a feature of Nine-Men's Morris. Capturing is by the custodian (or epaulette) method. In this, a capture is made by moving a man to flank an opposing man on both sides, the three men being in a straight line and adjacent to one another. A man may, however, move between two opposing men without harm. Captured men are removed from play, and a move involving a capture grants the player another turn. More than one man can be captured in a single move, but (although it is not made clear in the rules) two or more adjacent men of the same colour are immune from capture along that line. The rules are also a bit vague about whether or not captures can be made in phase one, when stones are placed, but not moved on the board, but it would appear so.

The Navel stone is considered a white man during the first phase, but is assumed to be of either colour, to the turn player's advantage, during the second phase. (Since it does not move, the Navel stone serves no purpose that a mark on the

board would not serve, but its presence is necessary for visual harmony.)

The object of White, who starts the game, is to create a continuous line of men (not necessarily a straight line) from the Navel stone to the perimeter circle. Black's aim is to circumvent this, which can be achieved in several ways, the simplest being the reduction of White's forces to six men or less (when a continuous line is impossible), or the capture and securing of the centre-most circle.

What is critical in any evaluation of the game is the degree of imbalance that exists as a result of the different aims of the two sides. It is unlikely that they are exactly in balance, but on the other hand the difference may be only marginal, the advantage enjoyed by one side being perhaps no more than the first player enjoys in most abstract games. (The publishers claim there is no advantage to either side but they observe that the balance of power does shift in the course of the game, and 'it is to the advantage of both sides to bear this in mind'.)

The initial placement of the men heavily influences, if it does not directly affect, the outcome of the game. It was here that

I found a strong parallel with Go. The best strategy for both sides (though bearing in mind their different objectives) is a marking out, rather than a mass occupation of territory. Over-concentration of force is self-defeating since it is uneconomic of resources. Put more simply, strategy should be aimed at controlling territory using the minimum number of men.

Verdict: an interesting game on which it would be easy to get hooked given strong opposition, but at a price that I feel is excessive even for these days. The board is of unseasoned wood (mine was in consequence warped when I received it) with knots and other small flaws. One of the pleasures of a traditional game, and to many one of its main pleasures, is the quality of the components. Yes, I know the argument: a new game of limited appeal (and the appeal of *Fidchell* is limited, almost by definition) will only bear a small production run initially, which in turn dictates a high retail price. The counter argument is that if you want to sell a game like this it should be pleasing both to the eye and to the touch. An extra pound or two on the price would be neither here nor there.

David Pritchard

MURPHY

DESIGNED BY
RIK VAN EVEN

PUBLISHED BY
FLYING TURTLE GAMES

PRICE £18.95

2 TO 6 PLAYERS

RATING: 8

Murphy is another fine game from Flying Turtle Games in Belgium. It takes about an hour to play and, while it *can* be played by 2-6 players, it is best with three or four.

As with all of the Turtle Games the box is illustrated with a brightly coloured witty line drawing in the continental European comics style. Inside the box there is a clear, bright board, a die, 35 small cards, seven coloured pawns and various markers, banknotes and similar accessories.

The board is dominated by a map of southeast Asia. Seven cities are marked by grey rectangles and a coloured pawn is placed randomly on each of these.

Macao is indicated by a white rectangle and the eight cities are linked by a single, continuous line to indicate the links between them. The cities are unmarked and geography is my weakest *Trivial Pursuit* category but I think the sequence is Macao - Manila - Singapore - Bangkok - Columbo - Delhi - Peking - Osaka - Macao (or the other way around). At each corner of the map is a circle containing an airplane, a butterfly net, spectacles and a saxophone, respectively. These represent the McCoin traits and a marker moves clockwise around them during the course of the game.

The pawns have two functions: when one arrives in a city containing another pawn it is a detective. When one is visited by another pawn it is a McCoin (a possible heir).

The 35 cards are dealt into seven stacks of five cards (one airplane, one net, one pair of spectacles, one saxophone and one 'black-out' card). There are seven of each trait card, of which five are green and two are red. The piles are random and one is placed coloured side down on each of the seven coloured spaces at the left hand side of the board. These represent the personalities of each of the seven possible heirs. Beside the seven coloured spaces is

a track of each of the seven colours with a marker indicating the colour of the current detective.

Players start with no money and although they can borrow money at any time (repayable at three times the original sum) it is not possible to win if your outstanding debt is more than 12 000 FT (the unit of currency is the Flying Turtle) greater than that of the player with the lowest debt.

On their turn players get to move the specified active detective to meet a possible heir and may move one other of their choice. The moves are limited by the die roll but it is possible to adjust the die roll by spending money. The die roll also determines the revenue for that turn (the revenue is inversely proportional to the die roll). Some cities tax detectives who stay there.

When a detective visits a possible heir the player may obtain a clue by looking at one of the cards in the pile on the space that is the same colour as the pawn that is being visited by the Main Detective pawn. There are two red cards and five green cards for each trait. An heir must have green rectangles on all four trait cards. If the card bears a red rectangle that



heir does not possess that trait and cannot be an heir. Normally the player has to pay to look at the clue (although in some circumstances it is free) and black-out cards prevent further traits being examined without that city being 'unblocked'. Unblocking costs money but enables the player to examine any trait.

It is necessary to decide before the game just how much information will be revealed during play. The more secrecy the

tougher the game but it is more rewarding than the 'family version'. Once a player thinks that they have the solution they write a list of the colours of the true heirs, then check the seven stacks. The first correct solution wins the game. An incorrect solution eliminates that player.

Murphy is a fascinating deductive logic game in the 'Cluedo' genre. It has delicious opportunities to stitch up your fellow players and the relationship between

revenue and movement neatly balances the element of chance. A player should aim to determine the sequence of trait cards in each pile (so that they do not waste money hunting through a pile) and should watch the enquiries made by other players because the sequences can be informative in the endgame.

The game's main problem is the inactivity necessary whilst waiting for other players' turns. Players cannot do anything except take notes and think outside their own turn and it is not possible to plan one's move ahead of time because circumstances change so fast. A reasonable house rule to handle this is to limit every player's turn to one minute. If you fail to do this the game will last at least 30 minutes per player and much of that time will have been spent waiting.

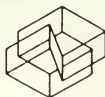
The Flying Turtles can justly be proud of this game and I hope that it catches on in the UK.

Theo Clarke

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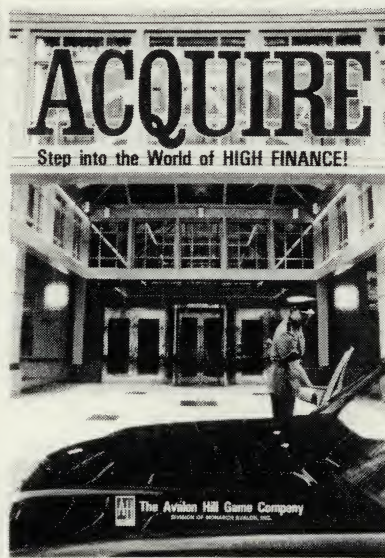


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STOCK WATCH

Share & share alike

After property, racing, and war the Stock Market must be one of the most popular themes for the budding designer. The results have been a somewhat mixed bag, perhaps owing to the central notion that share prices simply go up and down. Computers are able to circumvent this limitation to a certain extent by providing a vast information bank, which at least gives the player source data on which to base his decisions. In this comparative study, we take a look at three of the latest software products on the subject. But first, a brief scan of existing games.

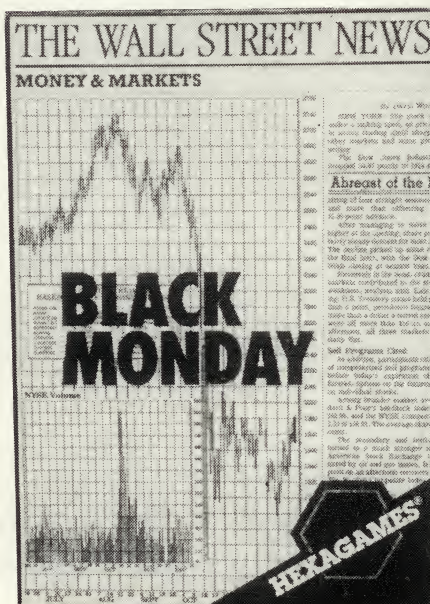


Acquire

ACQUIRE

Designed by Sid Sackson, published by Avalon Hill. Price £17.95.

Although not strictly a stock market game, it is certainly the best known financial game. The aim here is to become the majority investor in hotel chains that look ripe for takeover. In the later stages, players must change their tactics to acquire holdings in the biggest



Black Monday

chain. A fascinating game and one of the best on the subject.

BLACK MONDAY

Published by Hexagames. Price £8.95

Neat little card game from Sid Sackson which has no pretences to being a simulation. It is, though, a fun game in its own right.

BÖRSENSPIEL

Published by Ravensburger. Price £9.95

Although published by a German company this game is, in fact, of American origin. **Broker**, as it is known in English, illustrates perfectly, and definitively, both



Börsenspiel

the limitations and excitement of the genre. Players get dealt a hand of cards, some put a company's price up, others put it down. Despite the simplicity of the game system, nobody has been able to better it. Ravensburger's production values make this a gilt edged purchase for those interested in the subject.

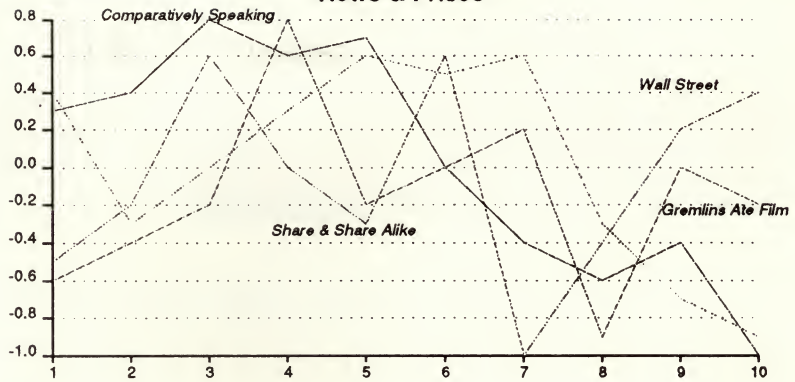
INSIDER DEALING

Published by Fantasy Games. Price £27.95

£27.95 is a lot of dough to pay for a calculator, but that's the only useful thing in the box. This game is simply a tacky attempt to cash in on the Ivan Boesky scandal, which reduces the market to a die rolling race. Not recommended.

STOCK WATCH

News & Prices



LONG SHORT

Published by Hexagames. Price around £25 in Germany.

Hard to find new copies, but easily come by on the second hand market, **Long Short** attempts to apply the Börsenspiel system to commodities. A good try that somehow doesn't quite come off. The event cards should certainly be jettisoned.

MARKET MADNESS

Published by Yaquinto. Price around £25

Described by Yaquinto president Steve Peek as 'the game that refuses to die', **Market Madness** has now been licensed by a Canadian company who promise to run annual competitions in schools to teach students 'the workings of the market'. Somewhat a clone of Börsenspiel, though this is no bad thing.

ROLL OUT

Published by Supremacy Games. Price £29.95

A real weirdo, this one. Full of interesting ideas that don't quite add up to a whole, this is an ideal candidate for our games clinic. Calling all surgeons.

STOCKMARKET

Published by Jordans. Price £20.95

A game that has its admirers, but other than being able to put the price of Saatchi and Saatchi shares through the basement, I am not one. Players get dealt a hand of cards (as per (Börsenspiel), but every three rounds they must play all of

them, thus making predictions difficult if not impossible.

STOCK MARKET SPECIALIST

Price £22.95. The official game of the NYSE.

Heavy duty stuff and the ultimate simulation. You really need to have worked in the market itself just to understand the rules. Ideal for traders seeking a busman's holiday.

SHOCKS AND SCARES

Published by Gibsons. Price £10.95

Any game designed by Francis Tresham is bound to be of some interest and this, one of his lesser known efforts, is no exception. Although not terribly serious, it is a game which repays careful thought, but which unfortunately is hindered by some of the worst artwork and production quality ever to appear in a box.

SHARE MANIA

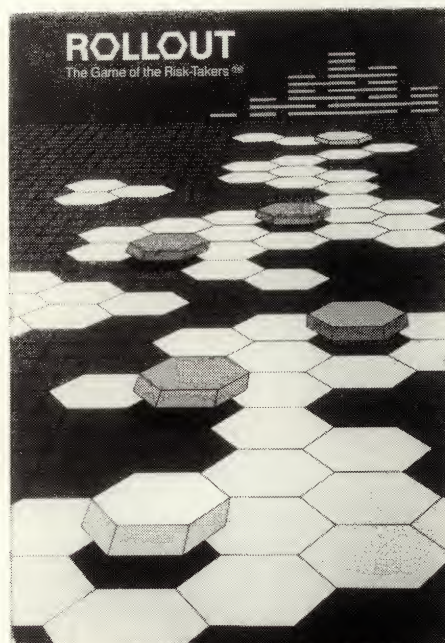
Published by Perfect Games. Price £6.99

Despite the presence of dice, there is ample scope for strategy in this small but perfectly formed offering from our old friend Julian Musgrave. The low price reflects the minimalist production values.

COMING SOON:

Wall Street (Thomas Games) a new game about the famous street, emanating from Reno, Nevada. To be reviewed.

In The Money (Games For Pleasure). Apparently, a new game from the UK's Leading Authority on Boardgames, though no firm details have been received as yet.



Rollout



Market Madness

Brian Walker

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WALL STREET

DESIGNED BY
HOLGER KRAUSE

PUBLISHED BY
MAGIC BYTES

PRICE £19.95

GAME PLAY:



GRAPHICS: N/A



Available for all
formats.

It is sometimes said that one of the reasons computer games occasionally suffer from lack of game play, is that the programmers simply aren't gamers. Equally true is that many of the players of these products are not gamers either. They are quite content to gaze in wonderment at the screen, and thrill to the pretty pictures scrolling thereon. This latest offering from Magic Bytes, despite being of German origin, confirms the wisdom of the former statement while at the same time (understandably) offering little in the way of aesthetic appeasement to your average computer gamer.

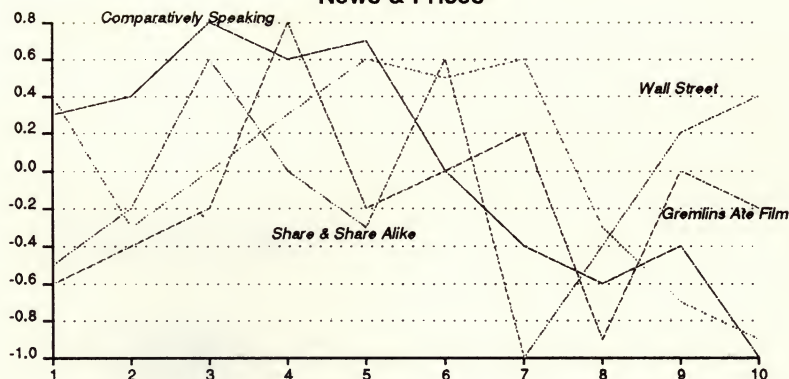
OPPORTUNITY STOCKS

Problems start straight away with the appallingly vague manual. For example, it's not until you start scrolling through the screens that you realise that a print option is available. Some of the command keys are incorrectly listed, while others just don't work. But back to the question of game play: one of the first things you are invited to do is to participate in a stock market quiz. The winner of the quiz starts with the most money. So here you have a game where the most knowledgeable (and thus advantaged) punter, is able to start with up to 75% more cash than someone who, say, knows about as much about the stock market as Robinson Crusoe. Whatever happened to the notion of a balanced start, chaps?

The 'game' here revolves around a series of reports and telexes. Although you are only supposed to get three of these each turn, you'll find you can get as many as you want simply by hitting 'ESC' and then 'n'. After studying these missives, players make their purchases and sales. So if say, you read that Kodak have invented a camera that can film through walls you might, after a little head scratching, consider investing in a well

STOCK WATCH

News & Prices



known photographic company. And that's about it I'm afraid, old bean. Except for the typing test. To 'simulate the excitement of the exchange hall, each player is allowed a limit of ten seconds to complete all transactions' advises the manual in an outburst of clarity. As the interface is keyboard only, those of you who think typing is for girls will have as much chance of completing your transactions as a hooker in a mosque. As a one player

game this is a non starter. For one thing, there aren't any computer players provided, so you've nothing to compete or measure your performance against. It might be better as a multi player game but it's doubtful. As it stands, **Wall Street** is merely an unusual way of finding out if you have a future as a speed typist.

Brian Walker

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TRADING PLACES

WALL STREET RAIDERS

DESIGNED BY
MICHAEL D. JENKINS

PUBLISHED BY
INTRACORP

PRICE £39.99

1 TO 4 PLAYERS

Available for PC.

Mouse interface.

After a hard day at the office spent staring at screens, bellowing down telephones and consuming gallons of premium extra-strong lager, what does the typical stock exchange wheeler-dealer like to do? Why, sit at home in front of a screen and play a computer stockmarket game.

Until the release of these two games, the only decent computer stock market game available for the City 'stress junkie' was Zortech's simulation **Big Bang** (reviewed in GI #11). **Wall Street Wizard** (**Wizard**) and **Wall Street Raider** (**Raider**) both enable the player to wheel and deal on the stock exchange without the risk of losing or, sadly, gaining pots of money, but they approach the subject in different ways. **Wall Street Wizard** concentrates on the activities of the stock exchange floor and is for the budding Gordon Gekko, anxious to make a killing on fast rising shares prices. **Wall Street Raider** puts more emphasis on using the stock market to gain control of companies, and is therefore more suited to the would be Lord Hanson or T Boone Pickens.

GOING TO MARKET

In both games there are a limited number of stocks in which to trade. In **Wizard** there are 48 shares from a dozen or so sectors (for example: 'Food Retailing', 'Chemicals') and in **Raider** there are 150 companies from 26 sectors. **Wall Street Raider** boldly uses real companies while **Wizard** plays it safe and uses imaginary but not altogether unrecognisable names (such as Seccson instead of Exxon).

The share prices, of course, move up and down according to supply and demand. What determines supply and demand is market opinion about each company's prospects. Naturally, market sentiment towards a stock can be altered by events. To simulate this both games have a data-

VS

John Harrington



base of news stories which are broadcast on screen at intervals, thereby inviting a player to interpret the likely effects of the new development and trade accordingly. **Raider** appears to have a much larger database of news stories, although to be fair to **Wizard** I was only playtesting it on a 520ST – on the 1040ST the number of events is larger.

In some respects the larger news database of **Raider** is a disadvantage in that you can receive too much information. The news 'ticker' chatters away incessantly, churning out information on the 150 **Raider** stocks, providing updates on share prices, earnings figures, large share transactions, bankruptcies, new product launches and takeover attempts. In addition, government statistics relating to the economy as a whole are released periodically. These are generally worth studying as they can move whole markets, not just the share price of one or two companies.

To take just one example, a decision by the government to increase the level of direct taxation is bad news for just about everyone, but particularly those companies in the leisure or consumer durables sectors. By contrast, the **Wizard** news-wire provides a mere two news items per day and these are usually company-specific. I should, at this point, warn potential **Wall Street Wizards** about the wife of the chairman of Cyclops Industries. She is a right old slag who will sleep with anyone, and, if your luck is in she will give you some inside information about the company. If your luck is out all you get for your troubles is a large hotel bill and a nasty little rash.

The comparative lack of general economic data in **Wizard** is a reflection of the time scale used in the game. Whereas in **Raider** the average turn lasts somewhere

WALL STREET WIZARD

DESIGNER UNKNOWN

PUBLISHED BY
DATA LIBERATION

PRICE £24.99

1 TO 6 PLAYERS (2 PLAYER
MODEM OPTION)

Available for all formats. Reviewed on ST.

Mouse interface.

around one month, encouraging you to take a longish term view, a **Wizard** turn consists of one day's trading. A typical day might consist of the following: accepting buy or sell orders from clients, from which you earn a commission if you execute them within the specified time; going to the market and either bidding for or offering stock from your order book (or personal account if you are dabbling in shares yourself), or responding to bids or offers from other jobbers. This last activity is quite jolly, as the potential trades appear in the form of word balloons which emerge cartoon style from the mouths of the jobbers; in order to trade with them you have to click on the balloon with your mouse pointer before the balloon disappears. Naturally, the real bargains do not stay available for very long and you have to keep an eye out for the main chance. Finally, at the end of the day you can return to your office and do some research on companies, analyse recent news stories, and commission reports on the future prospects of various companies or industries.

WHAT'S ON THE MENU?

Wall Street Raider is completely menu driven and as such can be played without any reference to the rule book, provided you know a bit about the stock market. The buying and selling of shares is a much drier affair. You simply pull down a menu and opt to buy some shares in your chosen company. Provided you have enough dosh to buy the shares – and if you don't, the program informs you how much credit you have available from your bank – you deal. If the trading lacks the excitement of the hurly burly of the stock exchange floor, the research facilities available in **Raider** score much higher than those in **Wizard**. In the latter you can pay for a profile on a company but this provides only a few basic details and

a few hints on the company's activities which may have some relevance to future news items. In **Raider** you can access highly detailed company accounts, stock-broker analyses (including Buy, Hold or Sell recommendations), industry summaries (market share, earnings per share, dividend yields, price/earnings ratios) and diagrams of shareholdings. Furthermore you can perform searches, whereby the program will seek out the sort of company you are looking for (for example, low share price, high dividend yield, good net asset value to share price ratio).

The research side is at the heart of money making in **Raider**, where the name of the game is financial engineering and empire building. The game allows for agreed mergers, contested takeovers, greenmail, junk bond issues, asset stripping, share buybacks, anti-trust suits, R&D programmes, conglomerations and lots of other stuff which is probably sending most of you to sleep right now. The appeal of this is somewhat esoteric, and not everyone experiences the same *frisson* from stitching up an opponent's takeover plans by taking a large blocking stake in his company. **Wall Street Wizard** gets round this by introducing a fun element in the form of industrial espionage, sabotage, insider dealing and other dubious practices – including employing thugs to mug your opponents on the way home

from the wine bar. **Raider**, being more of a simulation, takes the more sober view that the stock market is a vicious enough place as it is without introducing such low-life gimmicks.

In the end, choosing between the two may come down to that hoary old question of what is preferable: game or simulation. **Wizard** puts the emphasis on fun and plays better than **Raider** as a solo game, and would therefore better suit the 'seat of the pants' style of player. **Raider** is a little dry as a solo game; you start the game with a considerable fortune and the temptation is to say '\$250 000 is enough for any man, I'll emigrate to the Baha-

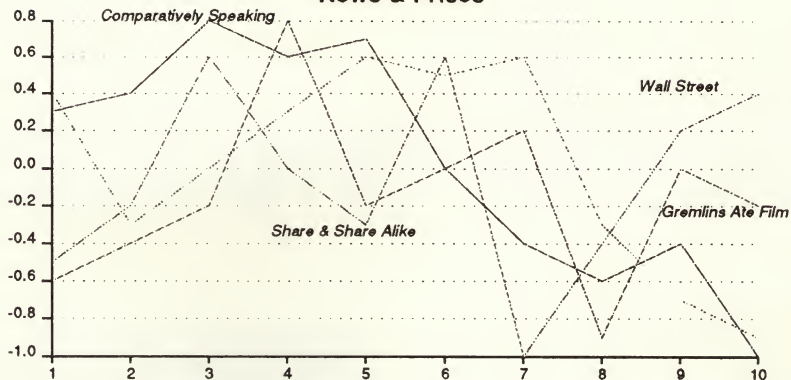
mas'. With the full four (human) players, however, the opportunity for the stitch up is irresistible and should appeal to the grand strategist. **G**

Wall Street Raider
Game Play: 6, Graphics: N/A
Available from Intracorp Inc, 14160 SW 139 Ct, Miami FL33186, USA.

Wall Street Wizard
Game Play: 7, Graphics: N/A

John Harrington is the editor of the Data-stream International Financial News Service. He is also a Spurs supporter.

STOCK WATCH News & Prices



CHARTS

Bestsellers

1. Pass the Pigs
2. Scrabble
3. Monopoly
4. Pictionary
5. Jenga
6. Outburst
7. Cluedo
8. Holiday AG
9. Risk
10. Murder She Wrote

Gamer's Choice

1. Holiday AG
2. Adel Verpflichtet
3. Wer hat Mehr?
4. Gold Rausch
5. Britannia
6. Dicke Kartoffeln
7. Lift Off
8. 1829
9. Civilization
10. Die Macher

New Arrivals & Grab It While You Can

1. Abalone
2. Dark Cults
3. Minden Card Cricket
4. Heisse Schlacht
5. Chamelequin
6. Holiday AG
7. Deal Me In
8. Seaside Frolics
9. Upwords
10. Petticoat Lane

REST IN PEACE

Sunk without trace

John Humphries

In 1976 two 'disaster' games were launched onto the market; Milton Bradley's **Bermuda Triangle** and **The Sinking of the Titanic** from Ideal. Whether it was the theme (disappearing ships) or not I don't know, but neither game received the acclaim it deserved. This was a pity as both games had new and interesting ideas which were worth pursuing.

Let's take a look at the Milton Bradley game first. The **Bermuda Triangle**, as you probably know, is an area off the east coast of Florida in which ships, planes and other pieces of assorted hardware are reported to have disappeared without trace. It remains one of the 'Great Mysteries of the World'. In the game, players sail their ships from port to port collecting various cargoes and trying to avoid being swallowed up by the 'magnetic cloud' which wanders around the board.

ALL AT SEA

The board depicts a map of the area with Florida on the west, Bermuda in the north-east, the Carribean Island to the south with a large chunk of the Atlantic Ocean in between. The central part of the board is covered by rows and columns of dots where the cloud is to be found. Outside of this area are four ports linked by shipping lanes which meander in and out of the central area.

Each player receives four ships, of one colour. The ships are plastic and contain a magnet. Players place one of their ships in each port. The cargo cards are sorted into products: sugar, bananas, oil and timber, and placed by their respective ports, money side up. The port near Key West is designated the Home Port and the home port bonus cards are placed nearby. During their turn, each player moves one of his ships along the shipping lanes according to the throw of the dice. When they reach a port, they collect the top cargo card plus the bonus if it is a home port. Each port has four berths and a ship cannot enter a port unless there is a vacant berth. If only two or three people play,



then only two or three berths are used. The object is to be the first player to collect cargo and bonus cards worth a total of £350 000.

UNDER A CLOUD

All very simple so far, but now we come to the 'cloud'. This is an irregular shaped piece of plastic with a picture of swirling clouds on top and two magnetic areas underneath. This is placed on a column or tube which is hollow with four fins protruding into the centre. A ring with the letters A to H encircle the tube and there is a notch which must always point north. The cloud starts on the central dot on the board which is located at the 'meeting point' of the fins. The letter A is placed by the notch. The cloud is moved according to the spinner provided (see diagram). When players have moved their ships, the spinner is spun and the cloud moved accordingly. For example, if the arrow points to E, 4, N the cloud is rotated on its axis so that the E is by the notch and then the whole unit is moved four dots north. As the cloud moves around, it covers ships and may cause a ship to attack itself to the underside of the board. When the arrow on the spinner points to North, South, East or West, the cloud is rotated so that the correct letter is by the notch and then moved in the direction indicated to the extremity of the central area. At this

point the cloud is lifted from its base and any ships adhering to it are removed and take no further part in the game. The cloud is then returned to the central dot.

Ships cannot be moved into or out of the cloud. However, the movement of the cloud may push them away from their original space on the shipping lane. In this case the ship is placed on the nearest space after the cloud has moved away. As there is no control over the movement of this devilish cloud, ships which are apparently safe can quickly disappear and be lost for ever, or at least for the rest of the game. The most dangerous area is around the home port, for both the entrance and exit are within the area of dots.

Players can overtake other ships, if they land on another ship, that ship is returned to its port of departure, in which case no cargo or bonus cards are taken. It is possible to prevent other ships from entering the harbour by occupying all the berths, although no player may have more than two ships in any one port. Ships must stop at all ports, even though the dice throw may have taken them past. There is not an equal number of cargo cards, so some ports may quickly be depleted of cargo, but one still has to dock there.

Although there are some tactics that players can employ, as suggested above,

Bermuda Triangle is primarily a fun game due to the vagaries of the cloud.

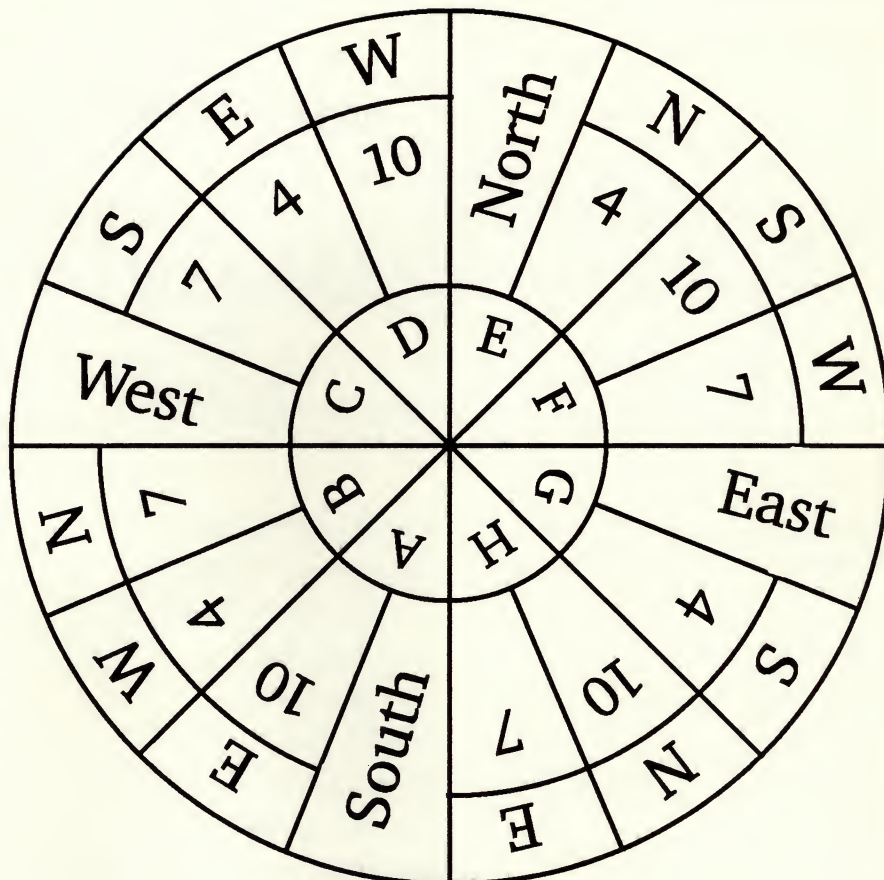
The game also ends when one player loses all his ships. In this case the player with the greatest value of cargo and bonus cards wins, it could be the player who has just lost his fleet!

A WATERY RAVE

The *Sinking of the Titanic* is quite a different kettle of fish. The object of this game is to rescue passengers from the sinking ship and deposit them safely, together with food and water, onto the rescue ship.

The first thing to strike one about this game is the unique board. It is in three parts, one represents the sky, another the *Titanic* and the third is the ocean. The boards are fixed together with a metal binder screw and post, with the sky at the bottom, then the ship and finally the sea. The sky and sea boards are fitted together with retainer clips so that the ship rotates between them, using the metal post as the pivot. I hope that's clear! The sky board is marked with an arc of white dashes, while the sea board has a squared grid and various islands. The ship is a sectioned view showing cabins and passageways and six lifeboat stations just below the funnels.

The first part of the game requires players to rescue passengers and collect food and water. The *Titanic* is placed so that it is level with the horizon and players put their 'ship's officer' playing piece on the start space. The passenger cards are shuffled and one dealt to each player. The cards have a cabin number printed on one side and a cartoon portrait of the passenger on the other. Players throw two dice and move along the passageways towards the cabin shown on their card. Once they reach the cabin, the card is turned face up and that passenger is rescued. On their travels through the ship, players may end their turn on blue squares and obtain a water token, and green squares to gain a food token. When a double is thrown, the player can move through a bulkhead and thus save a great deal of time. Each time a 1 or a 6 is thrown, the ship board is moved so that the white arrow marked on the stern lines up with one of the white dashes shown on the sky board. In this manner the *Titanic* slowly, or sometimes quickly, sinks bow first below the horizon. As cabins disappear below the water, they are hidden behind the sea board and can no longer be reached by the players. As each passenger is rescued, another passenger card is taken, if however that cabin is already



Spinner from Bermuda Triangle

below the water, the card is discarded and another one taken.

TIP OF THE ICEBERG

As the game progresses and the *Titanic* slips further and further below the surface, the lifeboats get closer and closer to the launching area. Players must decide the most appropriate time to abandon ship. When they do, they must move their ship's officer to the lifeboat station and place him in one of the white, plastic lifeboats. There he waits until his boat is launched. Empty lifeboats that reach the sea are placed on one of the islands.

Now comes the game's second phase. The sea adventure cards and the island adventure cards are shuffled and the packs placed next to the board. A player in a lifeboat rolls both dice. He uses the number on one die to move vertically and the number on the other to move horizontally. Diagonal moves are definitely out.

The *Titanic* continues to sink when a 1 or a 6 is thrown. In addition, when a 1 is rolled, that player takes a sea adventure card. This may cause him to win or lose passengers, food or water. When a player in a lifeboat reaches an island, he draws an island adventure card which have similar advantages and disadvantages to the sea cards. If a player is unlucky or stupid enough to still be aboard the ship

when all the lifeboats have gone, he must swim. In this case only one die is used and he must make for an island containing a empty lifeboat.

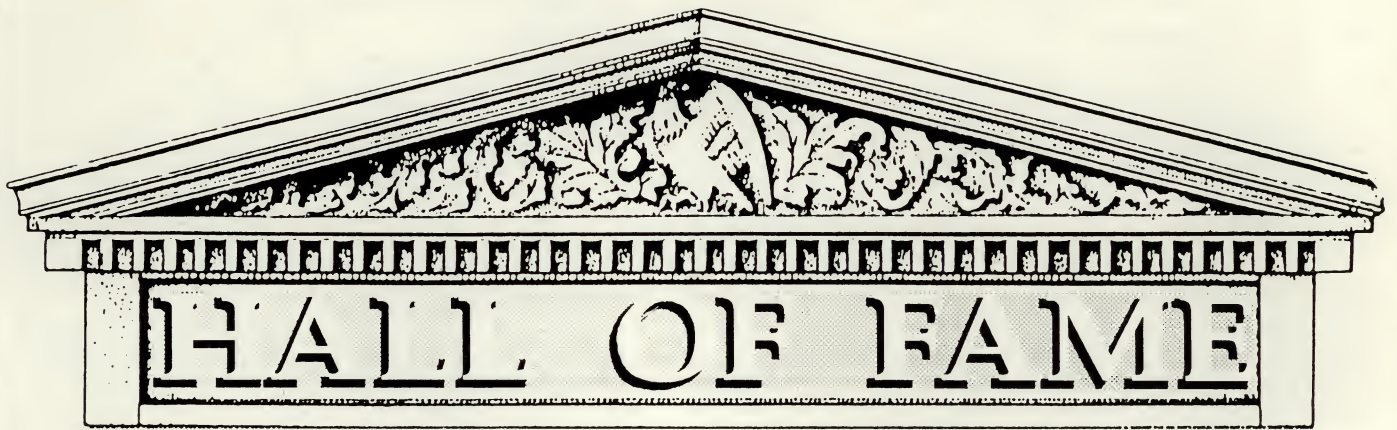
When a player lands, by exact count, on a square adjacent to another player, he may demand one passenger or one water or food token from that player.

As the *Titanic* disappears below the waves, a rescue ship appears on the horizon. Players must then try to board this ship, again by an exact count, bearing at least two passengers, two water and two food tokens. The first player to achieve this wins the game.

The *Sinking of the Titanic* is certainly not the best game ever invented and any relatives or descendants of passengers involved in the disaster will not wish to be associated with it. However, the revolving board is a novel idea as is the race against time (or dice throws) to collect passengers and so on. Perhaps if the publishers had used a fictitious name for the ship it may have fared better.

Both games are worthy of inclusion in anyone's collection, if only for their theme. GI

The Sinking of the Titanic was, er, re-launched, as *Abandon Ship*.



Compiled by the staff and contributors of *Games International*.

General Games

Acquire (Avalon Hill)
 Adel Verpflichtet (F X Schmid)
 Britannia (Gibsons/Avalon Hill)
 Civilization
 (Gibsons/Avalon Hill)
 Die Macher (Hans im Gluck)
 Dune (Avalon Hill)
 1829 (Hartland Trefoil)
 1830 (Avalon Hill)
 Football Strategy (Avalon Hill)
 Junta (West End)
 Liar's Dice (MB)
 Monopoly (Waddingtons)
 Pursue the Pennant (PTP)
 Railway Rivals (Rostheme)
 Scrabble (Spears)
 Sherlock Holmes Consulting
 Detective (Sleuth)
 6-Tage Rennen (Holtmann VIP)
 Statis Pro Baseball (Avalon Hill)
 The Strat-O-Matic Range
 (Strat-O-Matic)
 Summit (MB)
 Titan (Avalon Hill)
 Title Bout (Avalon Hill)
 Wildlife Adventure
 (Ravensburger)
 Win, Place & Show (Avalon Hill)

Wargames

Afrika Korps (Avalon Hill)
 Ambush (Victory)

Beda Fomm (GDW)
 Bonaparte in Italy (OSG)
 Chickamauga (West End)
 Crimea (GDW)
 Crusades (SPI)
 Custer's Luck (3W)
 Drang Nach Osten (GDW)
 Empires in Arms (ADG)
 Empires of the Middle Ages (SPI)
 Flat Top (Avalon Hill)
 Flight of the Goeben (SPI)
 Frederick the Great (SPI)
 Ironclads (Yaquinto)
 La Bataille series (Marshal)
 1914 (Avalon Hill)
 Panzer Command (Victory)
 Post Stanley (3W)
 RAF (West End)
 Rommel in the Desert (Columbia)
 Russian Campaign (Avalon Hill)
 6th Fleet (Victory)
 St Lo (West End)
 Squad Leader (Avalon Hill)
 Tank Leader (West End)
 Terrible Swift Sword (SPI)
 Up Front (Avalon Hill)
 War & Peace (Avalon Hill)
 War at Sea (Avalon Hill)
 White Death (GDW)

Rolegames

Ars Magica (Lion Rampant)
 Bushido (FGU)
 Call of Cthulhu (Chaosium)
 Chivalry & Sorcery (FGU)

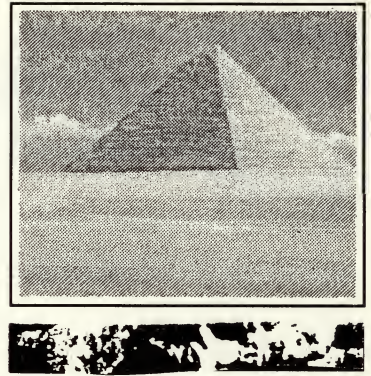
DragonQuest (SPI/TSR)
 Dungeons & Dragons (TSR)
 Ghostbusters (West End)
 GURPS (Steve Jackson)
 Maelstrom (Puffin)
 Pendragon (Chaosium)
 RuneQuest 2 (Chaosium)
 Tékumel Sourcebooks
 (Different Worlds)

Computer Games

Bard's Tale (Interplay)
 Codename: Iceman
 (Sierra On-line)
 Dungeon Master (FTL)
 Earl Weaver Baseball
 (Electronic Arts)
 Elite (Acornsoft)
 F19 Stealth Fighter (Microprose)
 Fire Brigade (Panther)
 Hardball II (Accolade)
 Interceptor (Intellisoft)
 Leaderboard (Access Software)
 M.U.L.E (Electronic Arts)
 NFL Challenge (Data East)
 Railroad Tycoon (MicroProse)
 Romance of the Three Kingdoms
 (Koei Corp)
 Sim City (Maxis)
 Their Finest Hour (Lucasfilms)
 Ultima (Origin)
 Zork (Infocom)

Can You Solve ?

THE RIDDLE OF THE PYRAMIDS



The Pharaoh's puzzle - Unsolvable

Pyramids - The Stairways to the Gods

For about 5000 years the colossal tombs we call the Pyramids have reared their great bulk from the hot sands of middle Egypt, challenging the wonder and admiration of generations.

The Pyramids were seen by the Pharaohs as stairways to their afterlife in association with the sun-god and as such were places of magic and ritual. The many passages and chambers ensured that the purified King could 'sleep' in peace without intrusion from the mortal world. Great ceremonies and magic spells kept mortals at bay upon penance of death and the power of these still remains with us today.

The Pyramids were great puzzles; puzzles about the passages, puzzles about the chambers and puzzles of magic.

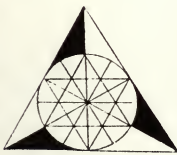
We have taken the Pyramids and their construction as our inspiration to present to you a true challenge, a challenge we believe few can solve, a challenge called

THE RIDDLE OF THE PYRAMIDS

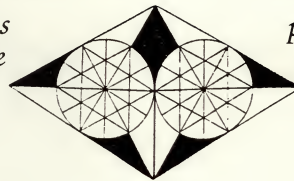


How to Solve The Riddle of the Pyramids

The puzzle contains 100 equilateral triangles each brightly coloured using 6 basic colours.



The object of the puzzle is to use all the 100 pieces and build a large equilateral triangle with a base of 45 cms.



To achieve this you must butt join each piece together and make sure that the adjacent colours are the same, green joins green, red joins red and so on.

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NEW!



SNIPER

Limited boom

Former Games Sweatshop supremo Ian Livingstone phones me with a request that I publicise a forthcoming project of his. Ever anxious to help the aged, I agree to do what I can. Unfortunately however, the phone line is rather fuzzy so the details may be a little garbled. The gist of Ian's message seems to be this: he (Ian) is rather peeved that all the best games seem to be German, so he has decided to do something about it. No, not move to Germany, but actually start manufacturing games himself.

With no intention of 'empire building' again, he is going to release a small range of games with a limited print run of 500 000 each. There will be no reprints.

Dr Livingstone Games (presumably) will be 'high quality productions of what Ian considers to be excellent games' (?). Each game will come with a numbered and signed certificate, plus an autographed photo of Ian working out at his aerobics class. His intended market is serious gamers, collectors, and autograph freaks who, he hopes, will understand the justification of an expected retail price of £250. This will be due entirely to the aforementioned low print run and the high production quality. The first two games will be released at Essen in October. One will be **Boom Town** which Ian designed during his 'drop out' period in Spain. The second title has yet to be announced.

STOP PRESS: A fax just arrived from Livingstone Games states that there will only be 1000 printed of each game, the price is expected to be around £25, and there will be no signed photograph. But what about all the groupies, Ian?

Pursuit of excellence?

Games lovers will be interested to hear that Serif Cowells, the company which markets and manufactures **Trivial Pursuit** in the UK and Europe, have been awarded the Queen's Award to Industry.

It appears that the seminal Q & A game has sold well almost everywhere, even in

Saudi Arabia – though not before the censor vetted each question. Perhaps he (it couldn't possibly be a she) was looking for references to the dreaded Salman Rushdie?

There is, however, one country which stubbornly bucks the trend: Germany. Serif's commercial director Robert Wylie has an explanation for this Teutonic abstinence: 'It's been tremendously successful in France, but it's never taken off in Germany. We think it's a humorous and entertaining game. Make your own conclusions'. Perhaps our readers may care to make theirs.

GRiM's fairy tales (2)

I had promised myself that there would no more references to *Games Review Magazine* (aka *GRiM*). However, their amazing ability to score own goals makes this one promise which is impossible to keep. In their May issue they published a house ad which claimed that *GRiM* was 'the only review based games magazine in the UK'. Given the existence of the magazine you are now reading, this seemed, at best, a rather dubious statement.

By a delicious irony though, just a few pages away was an ad from The Advertising Standards Authority, advising readers to complain if they saw an ad which they considered misleading or untrue. Splendid advice I thought, as I dispatched them a copy of this magazine together with the offending copy. A few days later, a letter arrived from the Committee of Advertising Practice advising me that *GRiM* had managed to squirm out of it by adding the rider 'published on a regular monthly basis'. It seems that because they have published more issues than us, they were entitled to make this somewhat snide claim.

Horror story

From one horror to another, though in this case of an altogether more deliberate kind. Occasional *GI* contributor Dave Hughes is to edit *Skeleton Crew* – a full colour glossy mag (published by Argus) devoted to the world of horror (no, not the

games business). No doubt related games will receive coverage given Dave's enthusiasm for *AD&D*, *Call of Cthulhu* and the like. Best of luck, Dave.

Same goes for *GM* which looks as though it has found a new home (see News page). Whatever one thinks of the magazine it certainly found a market that responded with some enthusiasm to its arcane (we should talk) offerings.

These foolish things

It seems that we are not the only ones with a talent for dreaming up April Fool games. The April 1st edition of the once great *The Sunday Times* came up with a game called 'Perudo', which, we were told, was being played by the 'thirty-something' crowd in fashionable haunts such as the media watering hole, Groucho's. The giveaway, though, was the line about the packaging: 'It's sold in a £34 travel version – which comes in a brightly coloured hand-loomed sock,' according to reporter Helen Fielding. Give me a game made from melted down tractor bolts any day.

A dogs chance

Not only our paying customers fell for our 'Grosz Jakosa' spoof. Just Games recently received a letter from no less a personage than John Hough of Avalon Hill's microcomputer division. Could they, he inquired, possibly supply a copy of the game. According to Mr Hough, there are a number of whippet racing clubs in the US which, although small, are 'very active' and would undoubtedly be interested in any game that featured these unusual animals. In order not to strain Anglo American relations any further, we'll keep our traps shut. G

M I N D G A M E S

What?

Mindgames '90 is Britain's only convention and exhibition covering every aspect of gaming: from boardgames to solo games books; from roleplaying to wargaming.

for Trade

A chance to exhibit, sell and demonstrate your games. The emphasis is on participation, not static exhibits; there is space for sale at a variety of sizes and prices, with big discounts if you provide gaming space on your stand.

for Gamers

Demonstrations and tournaments by major games manufacturers, plenty of free gaming space, plus a wide variety of participation events; among those booked so far are:

- Live role playing with Labyrinth
- WWI aerial combat with SELWG
- A Thunderbirds scenario with the S. London Warlords
- Siege of the Daimyo's Castle with the N. Farnborough Club
- A Sailing Ships Sea Battle with the Staines Club
- Railway Rivals Tournament with Dave Watts.

For role-players the Guild of Melee & Magic are providing a wide variety of games to sample, including Runequest, Star Trek, Call of Cthulhu, Dungeons & Dragons, Traveller and Top Secret.

Who?

Mindgames '90 is an independent and broad-based event; everyone is welcome to attend, try out new games and meet many other gamers.

When?

Saturday 10th November - 10 am to 11 pm
Sunday 11th November - 10 am to 4 pm

Where?

Mindgames '90 will be at the Novotel in Hammersmith, West London, chosen for its flexible space; excellent access by motorway, bus and tube; and plenty of car parking. We've added all day bar and catering at reasonable prices and a free crêche.

Want to know more?

For details of which companies are exhibiting, watch the games press over the next month!

If you'd like to visit; organise a game, competition or demonstration; or book exhibition space: please contact:

Mindgames '90
105a Queen Street
Maidenhead
Berkshire
SL6 1LR

Telephone: 0628 770676
Fax: 0628 35497

NEWS

The jest of friends

R Talsorian Games and Steve Jackson Games write to inform us that they have 'reached a friendly agreement' concerning the use of the term, 'cyberpunk' in the titles of their respective products. Translated, this means they are not going to sue each other.

Light flight

And now something for the man (or woman) who has everything: a 'glow in the dark dartboard', or the Nuon Illuminated Dartboard to give it its full moniker. This unusual item comes with three orange nuon flights on the darts and a black moulded hoodlight, presumably 180w. The cost of a 18 inch board plus arrows is £68.50. Bevvv extra. Further details from Omnilight Illuminated Designs, Tel: 0304 853006.

The Axeman goeth

GM magazine has folded. Or not, depending on who you speak to. Publishers Croftward say the next issue will appear in August and from thereon in will continue in a bi-monthly format with a new editorial team. The old triumvirate editorial team claim the 'concept' of *GM* is theirs. Armed with this concept, they are close to signing a deal with Newsfield where they will produce a magazine called *Games Master International*, the first issue of which should hit the stands on July 12th.

Former editor 'Axeman' Wayne, tells us that the problems started as a result of other Croftward magazines not 'making enough money'. Because of this, according to Wayne, a refinancing package was organised and 'the men in suits' were brought in. Unfortunately it seems that the Next brigade 'couldn't understand what *GM* was all about' and insisted that it be sold off, albeit as a profitable title. Because of increasing editorial disenchantment with Croftward, Wayne and co packed their rubber swords and word processors and headed off for Newsfield. Exactly what caused the change of heart at Croftward, or who is to produce the 'new' *GM* is not yet known. At the time of going to press all parties were unavailable for comment.

Glittering prizes

Nominations for the 'Game of the Year' award in Germany have been announced. They are as follows: **Secret of the Pyramid** (Jumbo), a memory game: **Tabajama** (Herba), a co-operative game from

Wolfgang Kramer: **Heutchel & Meutchel** (Kosmos), from last year's winner, Rudi Hoffman: **Lancelot** (Mattel), from Roland Siegers: **Dino** (Hexagames), from Reinhold Wittig: **Heiseschlacht** (Ravensburger), a reworking by Alex Randolph of his earlier **Kangaroo**; **Big Band** (ASS); **Adel Verpflichtet** (F X Schmid) by Klaus Teubel (reviewed this issue); and finally, an old favourite of ours, **Favoriten** (Walter Muller Spiele), reviewed in issue #11.

Like a virgin

A new chain of games shops is set to open towards the end of this year. Simply called 'Games', this new enterprise is being launched by former employees of Virgin Games who, it is reported, have 'serious merchant bank financing'. The emphasis will be on computer software games, though board games and hobby products will also be stocked. The first shop is scheduled to open in Reading in September, and plans are afoot to open a further thirty next year.

Scrabbled

The Scottish regional finals of the Scrabble 90 championships took place recently in Edinburgh, prompting a photo opportunity for marketing manager Ray Perry. The eventual winner was Peter Finlay from Sunderland (wor, Pete). He will now go on to play in the Grand National final to be held at London's New Connaught Rooms, June 23-24. The first prize in the tournament, in addition to various trophies, is a luxury five-star trip to Vienna for two. According to Mr Perry the standard of play at all the heats has been 'excellent'.

Trés sportif

Lambourne Games, makers of several excellent sports replay games, have announced plans for a series of sports-based card games aimed at a less specialist

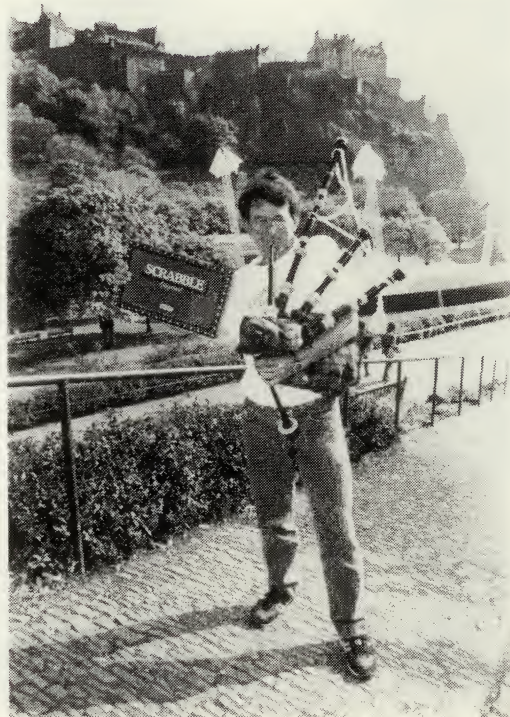
market. The first of these is entitled **The Big Fight** and is a two player game about boxing. The next in the series will be **40 Overs**, guess what that's about. Their next major game production will be **Wings Over France** - a World War I solitaire game covering the period known as 'Bloody April'. Finally, an expansion set for the highly regarded **Metric Mile** is expected shortly.

Back in the USA

Task Force Games have re-released **Federation and Empire**, a strategy board game based on the *Star Trek* series. In the wargames sector, The Gamers have brought out **August Fury: The Second Battle of Manassas**. This is the third release in their Civil War Brigade series.

In the spirit

The recent games bash at Burton-on-Trent was a huge success and superbly organised writes organiser Phil Bootherstone. The only problem was that most gamers preferred pretzels to beer, leaving vast amounts of the world's greatest drink undrunk. A wide variety of games were played, including many of Lambourne's sports games. TSR offered prizes to winners in the AD&D competition, while board wargames proved popular among the hardcore and casual gamers alike. All in all, something for everybody. This is an event which looks like becoming a regular fixture on the convention calendar. G



Perry pipes up

chart

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SHELL SHOCK!



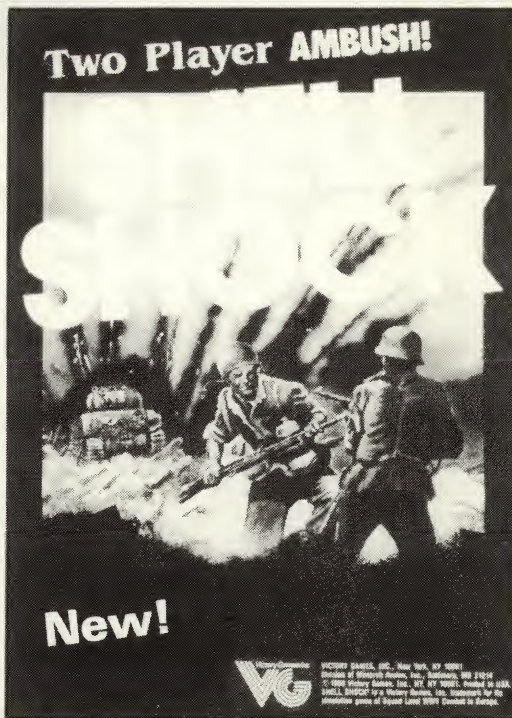
SHELL SHOCK! is a tactical level game of man-to-man combat in the European Theatre during World War II. Based on the popular **AMBUSH!** solitaire game system, **SHELL SHOCK!** depicts small unit actions, for the most part, accurately. However, it should be remembered that more happens in a single **SHELL SHOCK!** mission than an average soldier encountered historically in months. Thus, each squad in the game is above par in terms of abilities and combat experience and consequently will face an extraordinary amount of combat and adventure in its missions.

Since **SHELL SHOCK!** is based on a solitaire system, much care has been taken to preserve the "flavour" and suspense of **AMBUSH!** In most cases, defending soldiers are hidden from the attackers until activated and deployed on the map. Neither side knows what reinforcements, vehicles, artillery, and air support their opponent has. Random events also influence both sides and assure each *playing* is unique.

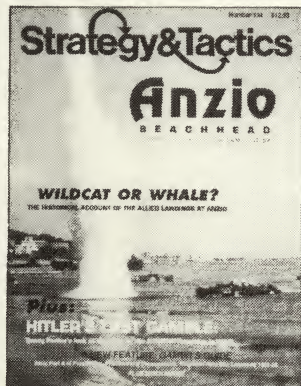
The Mission Generation system offers multiple variations for each basic mission type; different nationalities, squad types, objectives, targets, and so forth. The game can be played either as a series of unconnected missions, generating new mission information each time, or as a campaign, with the same squad's survivors meeting a variety of new challenges.

THE GAME CONTAINS:

One 22"x 32" Map Display with one 16"x 18" Map, Four 8"x 18" Maps, 540 Counters, One Rules Booklet, Two Mission Booklets, Two Player Cards, Two Squad Record Pads, Two Vehicle Displays, 120 Playing Cards, One Counter Tray, and Two 10-Sided Dice.



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REVIEWS

W A R | G A M E S

SHELL SHOCK

DESIGNED BY
JOSEPH REISERPUBLISHED BY
VICTORY GAMES

PRICE £29.95

RATING:



In the last few years, there has been a rise in the number of kit games available: games that are not really finished, but are being playtested by a paying public. The advantage to the gamer of this sort of game is usually twofold: financial, because the designer sells the kit for a fraction of the amount that a reputable game company would, and creative, because there is some chance of input from the player into a project that is still work in progress.

It is the kit game of which I am most reminded when playing *Shell Shock*. But this is no reflection of the components in the game, at least if judged on individual merit, but of the shambolic state that the rules are in, and the confusion with the feel of the game, which falls between the

rather distant stools of hard-core realism and Hollywood schlock.

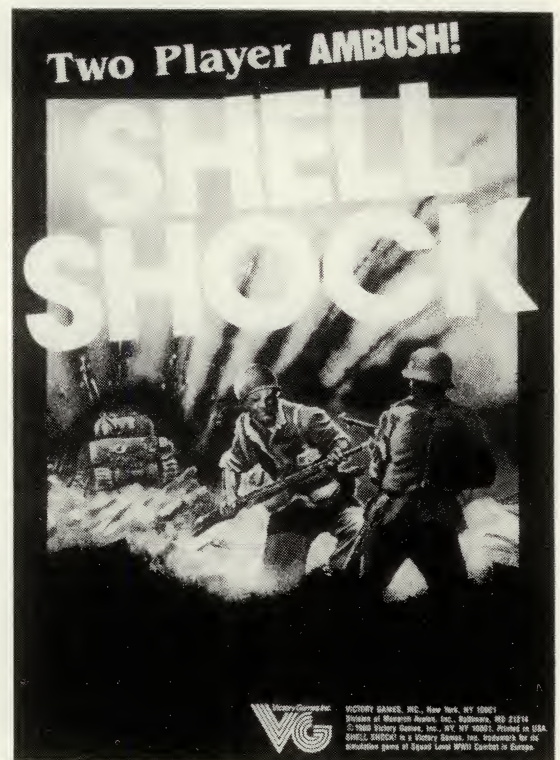
BREAD AND BUTTER

Shell Shock is an adaptation of the highly successful *Ambush* system, allowing it to be played by two people, instead of one person against the system. For those of you that have played *Ambush*, the necessary adaptations are probably obvious: the replacement of the paragraph system and most of the tables with the second player, and the more definite nature of the way in which the concealment counters and the rest of the defender's advantages work. It still seems to the attacker that his opponents are coming out of the woodwork all around him, but this is done by hidden movement out of line of sight of any of the attacker's units. It is basically the same game as *Ambush*, but unfortunately much, much less successful.

The first operation that needs to be negotiated when playing is the mission generation sequence. This allows scenarios to be generated completely randomly, although it is obviously possible, and in my view preferable to choose at least the mission type and the nationality of the allied forces once the basics are understood.

There are six basic scenarios: German heavy or light defence, allied heavy or light defence, the meeting engagement (a completely different game, with both sides entering the board at the beginning of the mission, and therefore with no set defender and attacker, which is the bread and butter of all the other scenarios), and a comedy rescue mission, which reflects the Hollywood aspirations of the designer.

Because of the nine different possible map configurations (I would strongly recommend using Blu-Tack when playing with the half maps) and all the different



target types (beware – not all the target types are fleshed out in the reference section) the four basic scenarios should be enough for most. I would recommend redressing the support point allocations in favour of the attacker as I regard the existing state of affairs as heavily biased in favour of the defender.

Squad make-ups are determined by means of roll-call cards, each squad consisting of two commanders and a varying number of soldiers, dependent upon nationality. Each character has five attributes: initiative (between 0 and 5), perception (between 0 and 9), weapon skill (between -2 and +2), driving skill (between 0 and 8) and movement point allowance (between 3 and 5). This allows, ostensibly, for soldiers ranging between the characters of *Dad's Army* and those of *The Dirty Dozen*, but in my experience, this does not really work, as only initiative is absolutely crucial.

ERNEST BORGINNE

Once all the palaver of generating the mission is over, the defender places thirty

		ACTION POINT TRACK					
		0	1	2	3	4	5
IN	0	4	6	3 5 8	1 2 7	0 2 5	0 1 3
	9	4	6	3 5 8	1 2 7	0 2 5	0 1 3
2 ACTIONS	0	4	6	3 5 8	1 2 7	0 2 5	0 1 3
	9	4	6	3 5 8	1 2 7	0 2 5	0 1 3
1 ACTION	0	2 3 4	0 2 3 9	0 1 2	0 3 4	1 3 4	2 5 7
	9	5 6 7	5 7 8	4 6 7 5 6 8	8 9	9	9
PANIC	0	2	1				
	9						
COMPLETE							
UNWARE				ALLIED			
				GERMAN			

concealment counters on the board, and secretly records in which his soldiers, targets and light supports are hidden. The game now progresses in two ways: operations and action rounds. Operations continue until a defending soldier is revealed, by means of a detection check at which point action rounds begin (if the rules are to be believed, actions are also initiated by targets, but how an unmanned crane might precipitate a firefight is beyond me).

Actions continue while there are still defenders on the board, but they are allowed, if they move out of sight of the attackers, to enter the evasive movement box and redeploy into any other concealment counter out of the attackers' line of sight. Each soldier either panics or has one or two actions per round, determined by cross-referencing his initiative with a die roll. Commanders are also allowed to

give actions to unpanicked soldiers. Each action allows a soldier to move, fire, prepare a heavy weapon, initiate an assault, throw a grenade and so on. The combat system is extremely deadly: even a pistol has a two in ten chance of incapacitating an opponent at twenty hexes – and this is one of the main problems with the mood of the game: if your Ernest Borgnine type character is as likely to be as incapacitated as your Private Pike type one, it is more likely that you will use poor old Pikey as cannon fodder. Also, as each side consists of around 10 men only, and even the wounding of one can be potentially devastating, heroics tend not to be at a premium. Long distance sniping tends to be the best strategy, and if there was an episode of *Combat!* which concentrated on this aspect of warfare, I certainly haven't seen it, and I'm sure it's a pretty dull one if it does exist.

The rules for vehicles are likewise a mish-mash of Hollywood and reality, with tanks and the like deciding to do not necessarily what you want them to. Again, this is a fine idea which is spoiled in practice because if one fails to make the roll to control the AFV for a turn, then its actions are completely predictable, and quite sensible, which is certainly not what I remember from *Kelly's Heroes*. The random event cards are interesting, but not interesting enough: the particularly wacky ones are unlikely to happen, so one has to make do with running out of ammunition or getting the odd extra action. It beats me, incidentally, why the random events are on cards anyway instead of a table, as the rest of the game is so chart and table bound. Also, one is advised to write 'lightly in pencil' on some of the cards, something which is almost a religious taboo with most gamers of my acquaintance.

TAUTOLOGICAL

This is a game badly in need of a second edition. The rules are extremely confusing. Far from being clear and concise, they are meandering, contradictory, tautological, and frustrating. There is no index, which makes reference sessions during play extremely tedious, and this is only compounded by the fact that there are two volumes of rules, and there is seemingly no real reason why particular points are in one and not the other. And

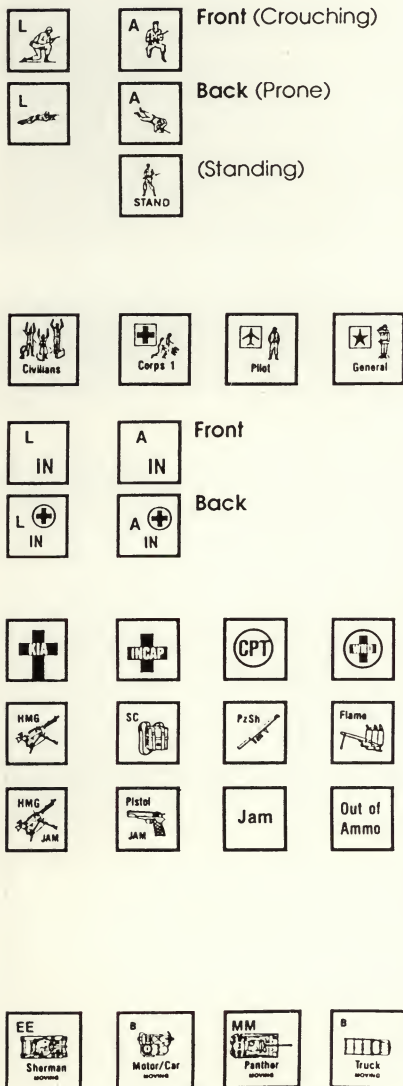


this is not the only problem with the components. The maps are very shoddy, I found, and do not stand up to the kind of continual staring that is necessary in any game. The charts on the mapboard do not agree, in detail, with the rules, and the counters are not described in full either, which makes it extremely difficult to pin down what some of the more obscure ones do. A couple of them still mystify me! Some of the counters, notably the heavy supports, are just plain wrong.

Compared with the original system, the two player version is obviously more open ended, but that aside, it is a wholly inferior product. The little bits of chrome that impressed me (such as the difference in the respective squad make-ups, and the almost role-playing way in which they are generated) are swamped by the morass of carelessness (the superhuman nature of the defenders' evasive movement which allows them to cover the entire board while the attackers crawl one or two hexes is a particularly glaring example).

Shell Shock is unfortunately just another example of a company messing around with a winning formula and ending up with a disappointment. This, coupled with the obviously rushed nature of the game, and its lack of coherent feel makes this a true turkey.

Jonathan Turner



MODERN NAVAL BATTLES II

DESIGNED BY
DANIEL VERSSEN AND ALAN
EMRICH

PUBLISHED BY
3W

PRICE £20.45

RATING: 8

With the notable exception of *The Godfather*, sequels seldom live up to the original. In the case of **Modern Naval Battles II** though, a reworking of the original could only mean an improvement. This is not meant to demean the first offering in what promises to be a series, more that there were several ideas contained therein which just cried out for expansion. Whether or not they needed expanding to the tune of £20.45 is something you, the reader, will have to decide.

In relative terms you do get value for money as far as the components go: 170 new cards, 100 counters, and seven war zone displays. The latter contain maps of the various war zones as well as functioning as player aid sheets – vital in a game such as this. One thing which should be made clear (and which the game box does not) is that you need to own **Modern Naval Battles** to play this. The first 'MNB' was every man and (vessel) for himself. The essential difference this expansion kit brings to the game is in transforming into a team format. In addition, most of the new cards can be added to **MNB** – rules are included to cover this.

SAVE THE PRESIDENT

This team game means that it is the US versus the former Evil Empire (or NATO v The Warsaw Pact to be strictly accurate). Each player is given a war zone (of differing victory point values) and the player opposite becomes his immediate opponent. Players are now assigned missions, can discuss strategy, and even exchange cards.

Missions consist of things like (air) 'Superiority v Superiority', and 'Civilian Escort v Raid' – each have their own victory conditions. The importance of the missions is underlined by the fact you do not get points for ships remaining in your fleet as you did in the earlier game.

Another difference is that rather than simply get dealt a fleet, players now have to 'buy' ships from their allocated points total, as suggested in the tournament rules

for **MNB**. In addition, players wanting to buy ships or action cards after their first turn may spend some of their points earned from a previous turn, however the items will now cost double their starting price. In the case of action cards, the cost gradually increases to simulate the difficulty of resupply in the latter stages of a campaign.

The battle sequence is more or less the same as **MNB** (including the infamous 'fog of war' rule) except that all players take their turns concurrently. This means of course, that it is *not* a team game in the strictest sense of the word. You still get a feeling of having 'won' (if you successfully complete your mission) even though the team may have lost. Victory, by the way, is achieved by tallying up the total number of mission points. The low total is then subtracted from the high total to ascertain the *type* of victory.

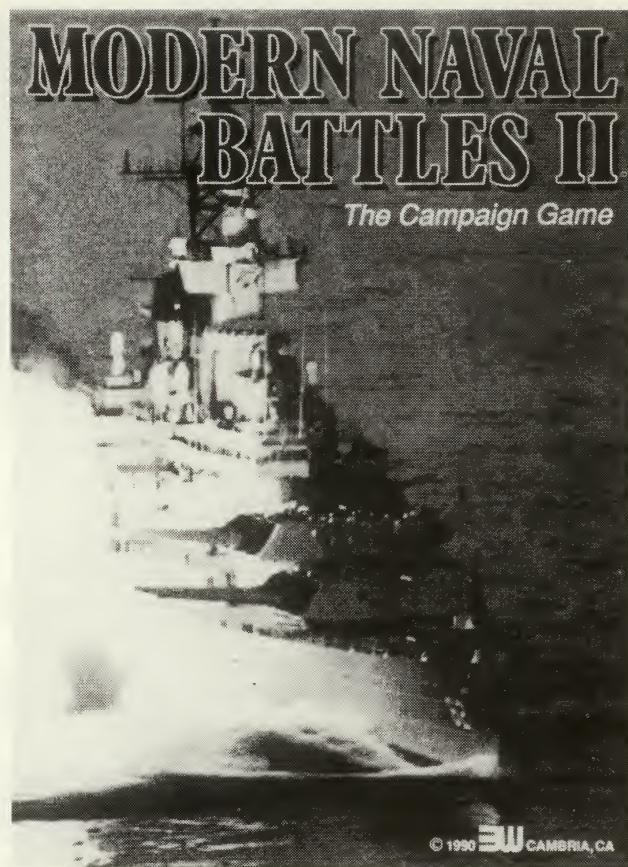
TAKE A DIVE

The new ship cards include civilian, military non combatant, and Foxtrot class subs. The five new action cards introduce surprise attacks, land based ASW, land based air cover, early warning systems, and crash dive. The counters provided are utilised in a standard wargame way – damage and track markers and so on.

The length of the game is left somewhat open, but I would go along with the suggested four turns per campaign. If you're really dedicated you play every mission and can even keep running scores.

The rules embrace the 'seldom has so much been crammed into so little' philosophy. Like **MNB** they are written in a sort of quasi-legalise so favoured by the otherwise estimable Alan Emrich, who, to his credit, acknowledged that the first set were less than perfect. Doubtless everything is here, but an index would have helped enormously if you are going to use this format.

Inevitably there are a whole boatload of optional rules. the 'special circumstances' look especially interesting. The



strategy tips and reminders are another useful addition. What is entirely unacceptable is the errata which we have now come to expect from 3W. The 'hit' figure on four of the Soviet ships is incorrect, which means that you'll either have to deface the cards or keep a separate note. This really is unforgivable. Haven't they heard of proof checkers in California? If you can live with this, then the game is really worth buying, assuming you have got **MNB**. This is not simply expansion for the sake of it, but a conversion into something entirely different and far more strategic.

The division between American ships and Russian ships give the game far more flavour now, and reduce the inherent absurdity of the mixed fleets that sailed in **MNB**. The facility to trade ships and cards once a turn is a good one and forces players to think about the overall campaign, not just their own mission. As stated earlier this is not strictly a team game, but even if the format is still not to your liking you it makes a good 2 player game. After all, wargamers tend to sail in pairs.

Brian Walker

VARIANT

PIERROT BRITANNIA

Dave Berry

I once saw a puppet show in which a Pierrot became aware of the strings that manipulated him. I sometimes feel similarly manipulated when playing **Britannia**. For example, why do the Saxons get more points for the South of England than for other areas? Why do the Dubliners get more points for Cumbria than for Welsh areas? There seems to be no intrinsic rea-

son; just a desire to force the players to reenact history.

The puppet cut his strings, preferring to die than to be manipulated. This is my attempt to 'cut the strings' in **Britannia** – except that I think that the result is at least as lively as the original!

The main difference between **Pierrot** and **Britannia** is that in **Pierrot** the victory point cards are ignored. This makes the

game easier to play and increases the range of strategies. The board layout, and where nations enter the game, generally make nations occupy similar areas to **Britannia**; this is encouraged by the existence of a 'home area' for each nation that gives extra victory points to that nation. Sea movement is more restricted than in **Britannia**, but not unduly so.

Pierrot is played as normal **Britannia** (Gibsons second edition), except that the victory point cards are completely ignored, and the following rules apply.

VPs for Occupying Areas

Every nation except the Romans gets victory points for occupation of areas at the end of turns 4, 7, 10, 13 and 16. In addition, each nation gets victory points when it first places its home area marker, or when it would place its home area marker if it had one.

The Romans score points at the end of turn 3 for each area that they have solely occupied at any time, and for areas con-

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trolled by submitted nations. They also score points for *limes* at the end of turn 5 in the usual way, including areas that aren't listed on the Roman victory point card.

Each area occupied scores 1 point, except for Essex and York which score 2 and home areas (see below) which score double for the relevant nation. Points for *limes* are doubled for areas containing a Roman fort.

Other Victory Points

Every nation gets 1 point for each enemy unit, excluding forts, that it kills or forces to retreat while it (the scoring nation) is raiding. Every nation gets 2 points for each fort that it destroys in one of its turns.

The Romano-British get 1 point for every enemy invader army they kill in Romano-British turns. Each invader nation gets 1 point for every Romano-British army that it kills in its turns. (See below for the definition of Invader nations.)

Every nation gets 1 point for each enemy leader it kills at any time.

Victory points for *Bretwalda* and king are received as in *Britannia*, including the special case of the Danish king at the end of the Danish turn 14. Special rules apply to the king, especially in turns 15 and 16 (see below).

Home Areas

Each nation except the Romans, Norwegians and Normans has a home area marker. A nation's victory points for occupying its home area are doubled. If the home area is a lowland area it can support 3 units instead of 2 when calculating population limits (population increase is unaffected). The home areas for the nations that start on the board are: Welsh: Powys, Belgae: Essex, Picts: Moray, Brigantes: Strathclyde and Caledonians: Orkneys.

An invader nation is eligible to place its home area marker at the end of its first turn after its major invasion in which it settles in any area. It may place its marker at the end of its major invasion. If it doesn't have a major invasion, it may place its marker in the first turn of the game in which it settles in any area.

An invader nation that has a home area marker must place it in an area that it occupies as soon as it is eligible to do so. It does so after raiders have retreated to sea and before calculating its population limit or counting victory points.



Whenever a nation that has a home area marker places a new leader, the marker is moved to the area in which he appears, unless the marker is in a lowland area and he appears in a hilland area. Leaders of submitted nations are placed by the nation that they are submitted to.

Movement

Units at sea may not move into an adjacent sea area before invading. They may move an area before raiding, but any retreat they make must be to the sea area that they started from.

Landing restrictions apply to all raids, invasions, major invasions and use of boats. Danes and Jutes have the same restrictions as Angles and Saxons. Picts may not land South of Bernicia or Cumbria. Caledonians may only land in areas in Scotland. Norsemen may not land South of Cornwall or Bernicia.

The Kingship

Harold the Saxon only enters the game if the Saxons are king at the start of turn 15. If another nation is king at this point, that nation gets a leader instead.

The King at the end of turn 16 is decided by the usual rules for turns 12-15, except that the Norwegians and Normans can only be king if their leader is still alive. Being king at the end of the game is worth 5 victory points for the Normans or Norwegians, and 4 for other nations. The other rules in the rule book for the kingship at the end of the game do not apply.

Reinforcements

Arthur and his cavalry must be placed in a single area south of York and Cheshire (inclusive). This area must be one containing Romano-British units if such an area exists, or a vacant area otherwise. The cavalry may exceed stacking limits in the phase when they appear.

All Angle leaders always appear.

The Normans get one army for every area they hold at the beginning of their turn 16, minus one, but none if William has been killed. They don't get three extra armies for killing Harold.

The Norwegians get one army for each area they occupy at the beginning of their turn 16, but only if Harald is alive.

The Romano-British

The Romano-British may attack any nation. Their home area marker is placed when and where Arthur appears (if he does), under the usual rules.

Invader Nations

Invader nations are those nations that don't start on the board, excluding the Romano-British.

That's it: I hope you like it. I've used these rules with the four-player game; it plays well, with a similar feel to *Britannia*. I think it's at least as balanced as the original although the exact balance between nations is slightly different.

If you want to experiment further you could try removing the points for killing forts and the extra *limes* points for areas containing forts – these changes should balance each other. It might be possible to remove the restriction on where Arthur and his cavalry can appear. I'm worried that they would always be used against the Picts or Brigantes and that this would upset game balance. Finally, you could try ignoring the rules for home areas. I find that they give a nice touch to the game, but you may find that the extra complication isn't worth it. G

Britannia is published by Gibsons and Avalon Hill, price £14.99 and \$25.

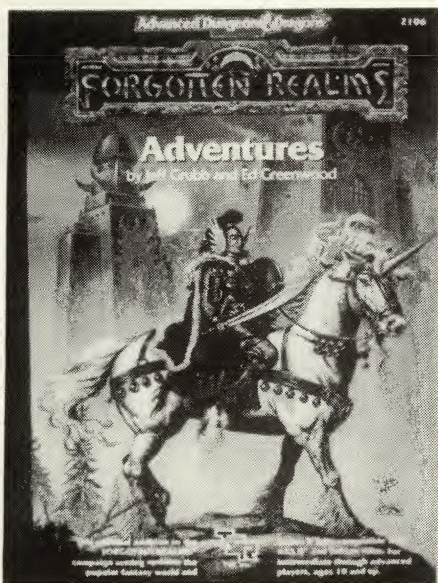
REVIEWS

R O L E | G A M E S

Once again we only have room for capsule reviews of the most interesting of the new releases this issue, though *West End's* serious contender, *Torg*, merits a full treatment.

AD&D supplements

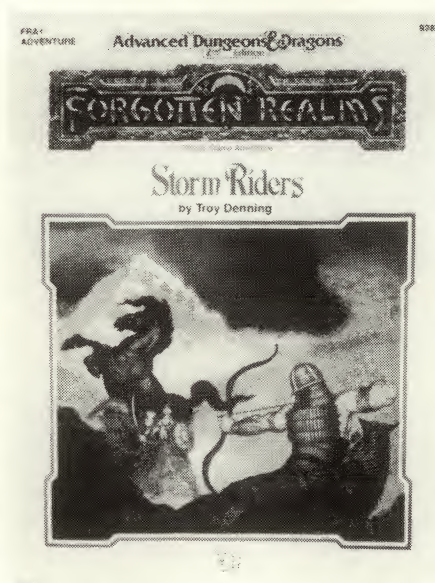
Two supplements have recently emerged for AD&D sporting spartan covers and called the **Campaign Sourcebook and Catacomb Guide** and the **Castle Guide**. The former is co-written by former fanzine darling (us old timers still remember *The Dungeoneer*) Paul Jaquays and features a collection of sound advice on how to run a campaign that is leagues ahead of the usual AD&D fare. The **Castle Guide** is even better, providing a fairly detailed feudal medieval background, including material on medieval wargaming. What a shame that AD&D is so ill-suited to such a game . . . Still, worth getting for the background material.



Forgotten Realms Adventures

'The coming of the Avatars and the Time of Troubles caused tremendous changes in the Forgotten Realms. Areas of dead

magic and wild magic have appeared; character classes have been altered; new magical spells have been discovered; old gods have been slain and new ones arisen.' Says it all, really. Despite the name, this AD&D hardback contains no scenarios, only a tired blend of new rules. If you're a Forgotten Realms completist you'll have to have it. Otherwise, forget it.



Storm Riders

This AD&D Forgotten Realms module is set in the lands developed in *The Horde* campaign set. Its momentum is provided by the (Mongol-like) Horde, and features much Oriental-style stuff including noted Sergeant Bilko lookalike the Dalai Lama. Like all AD&D material, diverse elements are thrown together without any thought or respect for their origins, and it seems rather telling that the illustrations are of westerners dressed in all the oriental gear. Despite this it's a thoroughly detailed, varied module that has far more to it than just combat, and which most players should find quite satisfactory.

Twilightcycle: 2000

Would you believe a *Paranoia/Twilight: 2000* crossover module? Well, after the wackiness of the *Paranoia/Cyberpunk* team-up *Alice Thru the Mirrorshades* it just had to be another *Vulture Warriors of Dimension X* adventure. You really

should play *Alice* first, so whether you get this or not depends on whether you liked part one. If so, you can look forward to another collection of smug humour and player-teasing mayhem, as the characters travel back in time to the 21st Century, to waste commies (great!). A third module is promised to complete the trilogy, though no clue is given as to which game will be teamed up with. **Bunnies & Burrows**, perhaps?

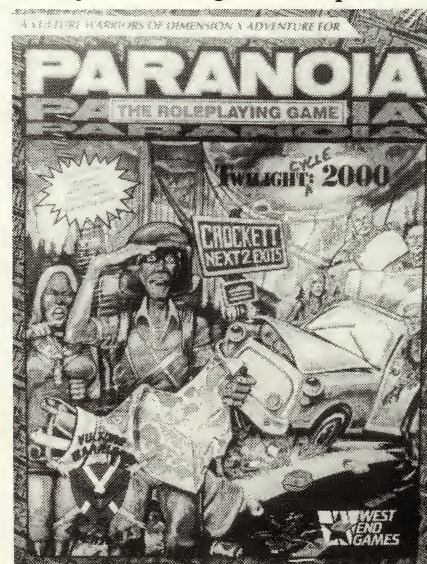
GURPS Fantasy

Fantasy worlds either tend to have daft names, such as Tharg, or unpronounceable-looking ones such as Yrth.

Yrth is a fantasy setting on an Earth-like planet, expanded here from its original treatment in the first edition. The background is medieval European and Arabic with twiddly, baroque bits such as elves, dwarfs and monsters. Throw in Earth religions, including Christianity and Islam, and you have a setting that anyone could knock up in a spare weekend and develop in another. For those gamers who are in need of a fantasy world in a hurry, the less than magical world of Yrth is out now.

Gurps Cyberpunk

Merchandising hype or fact about this supplement's seizure by the US secret service don't disguise the fact that the cyberpunk setting is a real rip-snorter of a background for a game. Computers in-

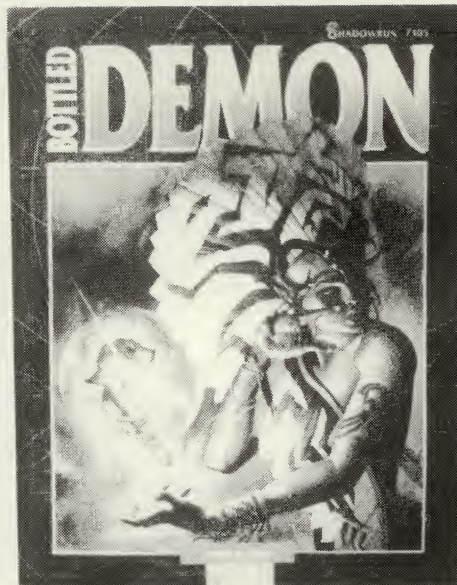


terfaced with humans and piles of personal morality make playing a cyberpunk character a challenge. Lovers of William Gibson's *Neuromancer* should start here. A sure breaker of ice at hackers' parties.

Bottled Demon

Shadowrun has one great advantage over GURPS for a cyberpunk setting: it isn't GURPS, although it does have twiddly, baroque edges . . . **Bottled Demon** is an object-oriented adventure for Shadowrunners that will get paranoid players asking the age-old question: why us? Ominously, it starts with a man walking up to the player characters in a bar. Ah well, you can't have everything.

Reviews by Ian Marsh and Paul Mason.



Roleplaying the Possibility Wars™

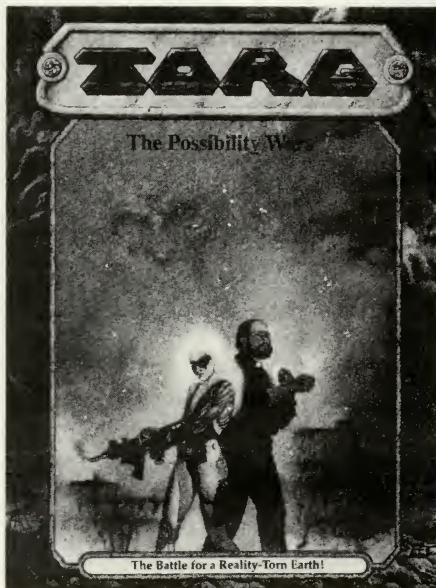
So, here's the 'ultimate role-playing experience', newly arrived from West End. Conceived as a marketing concept, the product promises a wide variety of support material. More interestingly, it offers the possibility for players to affect the contents of future releases by reporting the events of their campaign to West End Games.

The marketing origins of the game are clear in a number of areas, most noticeably in the background. It's a multi-genre game in which the world of today is reshaped by Possibility Raiders – cosmic invaders from other dimensions – who create such mindbending realms as the Cyberpapacy, Aysle ('heroic fantasy in a land split between an old evil and a resurgent good'), Nippon Tech and Orrorsh ('a horror realm in which magic and faith seem to favour the dark and twisted'). All of these coexistent realities are recognisable as established rolegame genres; the twist that Greg Gorden has provided is the background which integrates them, and which provides some dramatic tension.

AXIOMS TO GRIND

Let's start by looking at the base package: the boxed rolegame. What you get is a

large rule book, a world book, an adventure book, lots of cards and a rinky-dink multicoloured 20-sided die. The rule book starts with a very brief background and introduction before plunging into the detail of character creation. In the course of the introduction we discover one of the most important rules gimmicks of the game, one which is designed to allow the apparently contradictory genres to coexist. Sensibly, the designer realised that, since the idea of a multi-genre was pretty



silly, rather than attempting to smooth over the borders between them it would be better to make a positive virtue of this. Hence the game theme of *clashing realities*. The warring possibilities are resolved using *axioms*, descriptions of the four basic traits of a world: magical, social, spiritual and technological. Any activity requires a certain level of axiom to be performed easily. If an axiom isn't high enough, a *contradiction* will be created and the activity will be more difficult to perform.

Player characters are *Storm Knights*, exceptional people who found themselves capable of manipulating possibility energy. They are generated using templates akin to those introduced in *Star Wars*. Rather annoyingly, the templates are provided not in the rule book along with the rest of the character generation information, but in the world book.

Moving right along to the game mechanics we find that the main innovation is the use of cards. These regulate the flow of combat, give a clear indicator of the passage of game time, and allow players to have a certain amount of creative input (in this respect they resemble the 'Whimsy Cards' put out by the *Ars Magica* people). They're the kind of thing that would take a bit of getting used to for normal players, but overall should add a lot to action in the game. The normal mechanics are less novel. You roll a D20, roll again and add if the roll is a 10 or 20, and consult a chart to find out your 'bonus number' which you add to your skill to generate an 'action total'. This determines whether you succeed. If you succeed, you add the bonus number to something else (such as a damage rating for a weapon) to find your 'effect total'. All that can be said of this is that it is serviceable and not over-complex.

UNEXPLORED POSSIBILITIES

The rest of the book develops the ideas presented so far: the rules are fleshed out to allow for the multifarious possibilities necessary for a multi-genre game (a logarithmic scale is used for game values to enable meaningful measurement of a wide scale of values). Magic and miracles are given rules, and technology is described. By the time he reads this, the owner should have also read the Worldbook. Here is presented a background to the game including history of events following the arrival of the Possibility Raiders. Skeletal details are given of the various realms.

In the Adventure book we are given guidelines on how to run the game, along

with a sample adventure. It is here that we first start to grapple with how the designer anticipate the game being played. Up until this book, I had found the game quite imaginatively stimulating. The Gaunt Man, most powerful High Lord of the Possibility Raiders, sounded interesting, and there seemed to be some potential for atmosphere. I started thinking in terms of the work of J G Ballard for some reason, and vistas of crystallised forest, inhabited by strangely mutated creatures and gibbering wide-eyed men, opened up before me. But in the Adventure book, it becomes clear, whatever imagination has been deployed in this game, it is firmly rooted in the pulps. The adventure presented reminded me of some of the poorer *Space: 1889* fare, and the hints and tips are of the standard stimulus-response type which can be found in virtually all modern rolegames. The adventure does introduce the world background adequately, and for those players satisfied with rescuing damsels in distress and thwarting mad scientists, it'll entertain quite adequately.

The game is smartly presented, though it has to be said that the artwork is weak for a product of this prestige. In a sense, it is the 'ultimate role-playing experience' as it neatly combines all the elements and cliché of its predecessors. There's probably enough in there that a referee who found the background stimulating could run an excellent game. I'd be interested to play in such a game, particularly if the referee was influenced by the work of Ballard, Angela Carter and Philip K Dick. As it is, the game reminds me just a little too much of Pacesetter's doomed introductory product *Sandman*, which featured a similarly heady, eclectic blend.



TORG SUPPLEMENTS

With admirable alacrity, everybody's favourite shoe import company have put out supplementary material for their make-or-break marketing package. I'll skim over the novel *Storm Knights* as rapidly as possible, save to say that however weak they are from a literary point of view, novels of games can be useful as providers of background material to players loath to read it in drier form.

THE LIVING LAND

'The sourcebook of primitive reality' covers the zones ruled by the High Lord Baruk Kaah, who has brought dinosaurs to Manhattan. His three zones are on the east coast of America, on the west coast, and in Canada; of these the east coast zone is the largest. This 128 page book is split into two sections. The first details the situation in the United States. Baruk Kaah has invaded America with a race of eidinos (dinosaur descended life forms) whose religion keeps them technologically primitive. Many humans have adopted their religion, becoming Jakatts and reverting to savagery. The remaining US authorities try to resist the invasion, reverting to their own brand of savagery.

The second part of the book details rules for dealing with an area in which little technology functions, along with adventure ideas and new character templates.

This supplement once again put me in mind of the works of J G Ballard (*The Crystal World*, *The Drowned World*), though I don't think he was necessarily an influence on the designers, who cite Arthur Conan Doyle's *Lost World* and Edgar Rice Burroughs's *Pellucidar*. Unfortunately the tone is too relentlessly pulpish (You *must* defeat the Evil Invaders) to allow for subtle characterisation. Fans of those Doyle and Burroughs dinosaurs should love it, though.

THE DESTINY MAP

This scenario pack is part one of a promised trilogy, and takes the Storm Knights (that is, the *übermenschen* player characters) from America's Living Land across the world in the chase for a McGuffin. It's non-stop action all the way, with all kinds of wacky types joining in the Indiana Jones-meets-the-Muppets fun. Whether you'll enjoy it depends on how you feel about the pulpishness of the background. The pack is certainly de-

tailed and tightly plotted, featuring plenty of handouts to enhance the atmosphere.

Paul Mason



REVIEWS

COMPUTER GAMES

NUCLEAR WAR

DEVELOPED BY
ERIC HYMAN & JON VAN
CANEHEM, BASED ON AN
ORIGINAL IDEA BY DOUGLAS
MALEWICKI

PUBLISHED BY
NEW WORLD COMPUTING\US
GOLD

PRICE £24.99

GAME PLAY: 7

GRAPHICS: 8



PC and Amiga.
Reviewed on the PC.

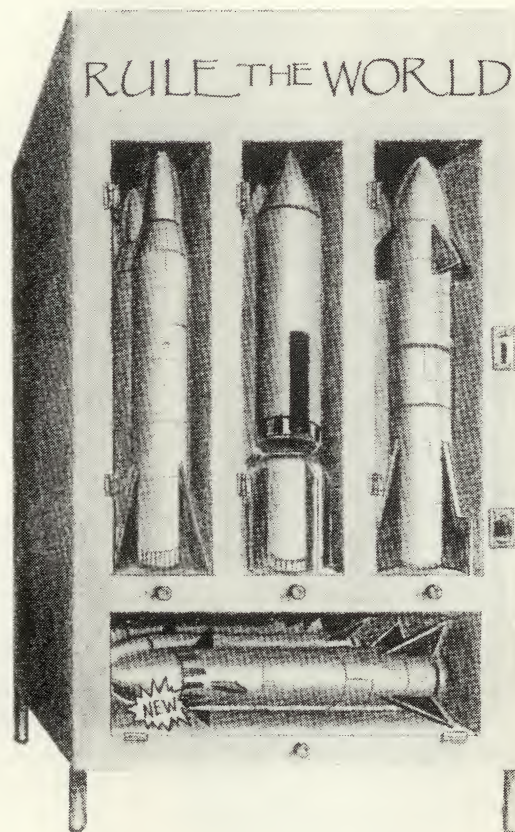
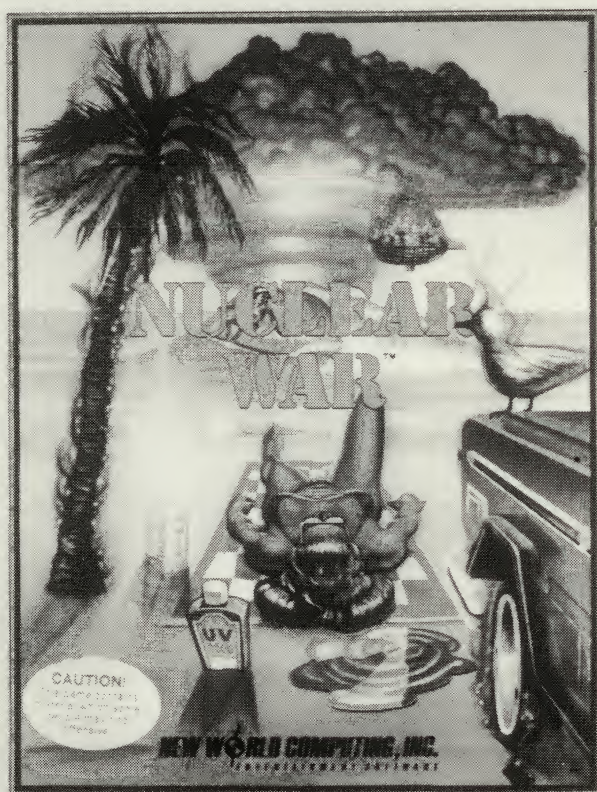
A sticker on the game box proclaims:
'CAUTION! This game contains materi-
al which some people may find offens-

ive.' Bollocks. What it should say is:
'This game contains material which some
people *with no sense of humour* may find
offensive.'

This is, of course, a conversion of the
infamous Flying Buffalo card game.
Whereas the latter was an (up to) eight
player game, this new release pits a lone
megalomaniac against four computer op-
ponents, some of whose names (and sen-
timents expressed on their behalf) might
be familiar to you: remember our old
friend Ronnie Raygun, or did you forget
too? 'It's bedtime for you Bozo,' he cries
as he prepares to turn his old pal Colonel
Khadaffy into a human barbecue (a sheik
kebab?). Step forward also PM Satcher:
'Oh! Do it again,' she pleads to Ronnie as
he pulls out the big one. Also present and
incorrect are Mao the Pun, and Ayatollah
Kookamamie, who, we are told, started
life as an 'innocent altar boy, until one
day he was locked into the end receptacle
of a laundry chute' – whereupon he dis-
covered a new use for sheets, presumably.

All in all, you get to choose from eight
opponents. To simulate diplomacy, you
can decide your attitude towards these
characters by clicking on a sort of 'smi-
ley' face, whose expression then alters in
accordance with your new stance towards
his or her country. This is one of many
changes from the original. None are
worse, none are better. It's simply differ-
ent. You build stockpiles, launch bom-
bers, wipe out entire cites, and blitz your
opponents with propaganda. One action
per turn. Last man or woman to survive
wins and checks into the hall of fame with
what's left of his or her population. All
good clean fun with nothing to stretch the
brain cells. What lifts the game above
average is the omnipresent humour. From
the graphics to the cover art – a bikini clad
lovely stretched out on the beach, as a
mushroom cloud on the horizon prepares
to give her the sort of tan she hadn't quite
bargained for. **Nuclear War: Glow for it!**

Brian Walker



The nuclear vending machine: mushroom soup anyone?

IT CAME FROM THE DESERT ANTHEADS

DESIGNED BY
DAVID RIORDAN

PUBLISHED BY
CINEMAWARE/MIRRORSOFT

PRICE £24.99 (IT),
£10.99 (ANTHEADS)

GAME PLAY: 9

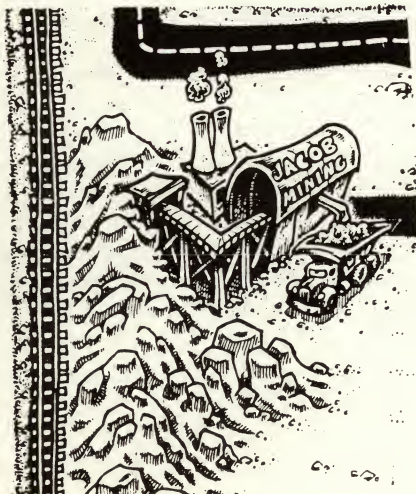
GRAPHICS: 9



For the 1 Mb Amiga.

As someone recently pointed out to me, *It Came From The Desert* has gone a bit past its 'sell-by' date. Fair comment, I suppose. After all, it will soon be celebrating its first birthday. However, in the best tradition of the B-movies which it evokes, there is now a sequel, *Antheads*. This new offering takes the form of an expansion pack – you must have *It* in order to be able to use *Antheads* – and so, Gentle Reader, your humble reviewer here presents for your perusal two reviews for the price of one.

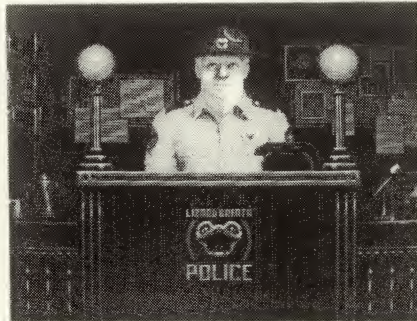
First, *It Came From The Desert*. This requires 1 meg of memory, and will involve a certain amount of hassle unless you have a second disk drive, but trust me – it's worth buying the extra hardware just to be able to play games of this quality. Right from the opening sequence you know that this is something special. The camera pans perfectly across a sunset desert; the typical deep-voiced, American-accented B-movie narrator sets the scene, while the eerie orchestral theme plays in the background; a fiery meteor plummets to Earth, briefly lighting the clouds.



The game begins in the small mining community of Lizard's Breath. You are a geologist, and someone is knocking your door!

I don't want to tell you much more than that. It's a bit like those old films which said 'Please don't tell your friends how this movie ends!' I don't want to spoil all the surprises for any of you who decide to play it. For example, all the game's characters are busy leading their own lives. Knowledge of this is not forced on you the way it is in some games – you have to get out there and find out. There is no way that you will be able to discover all the subplots in one game, and this adds to the lasting appeal of the game (I still haven't quite got to the bottom of what's going on at pump station 3).

Anyway, you will soon discover that the meteor has caused the humble ant to mutate into huge, nasty gi-ants. You have to stop them, of course, but the immediate



It came from the desert precinct

problem is that no one will believe such a mad story. In order to persuade the mayor that a state of emergency exists (when he will put the troops at your disposal) you need four pieces of evidence – a plaster cast, a tape recording of creature sounds, creature fluids and some creature tissue. The first part of the game involves you running around, telephoning, flying, possibly being driven off the road or knife fighting, and most certainly shooting at the big creeps in a frantic manner. After all, everything you do takes time, and you only have 15 days to save the world!

It is advantageous to have a state of emergency declared as early as possible, but even if you miss out on the evidence, this will eventually happen anyway when an ant eats the mayor's car.

At this point it all starts to look more like a war game, as you can deploy police, troops, construction workers, and 'concerned' citizens. However, you have no hope of winning a military victory – there are just too many of the big suckers – so all you can hope to do is to buy time while some brave soul locates the nest, enters it,



and destroys the egg-laying Queen. Guess who?

This is by far the best Cinemaware release yet, combining the usual blend of top-notch graphics and sound, strategy game, and arcade type subgames. In this case, the subgames began to appear endless. They include firing your gun at the big ants, tossing grenades and bombs, attacking in a tank, calling in an air strike, flying a plane, trying to extinguish fires, knife fighting, and running through the ants' nest with your flamethrower.

In the best 1950 movie tradition, the hero never dies. At worst, you wake up in the local hospital with a sexy nurse winking at you. This is OK, except that they may want to keep you there for several days, and there isn't really time to spare, so you must quickly learn to master the secrets of escaping from the hospital (hint: find a wheelchair).

All I've said so far hardly scratches the surface of this massive game. The graphics are, as usual with Cinemaware, first rate. The sound is the best I've yet come across in *any* game, and the spooky music wouldn't be out of place in a real movie.

And so to *Antheads*. The place is still Lizard's Breath, but the time is five years later. This time the narrator explains that no one realised that there was a *second* queen. By now the plot is even more involved – so much so that after several plays, I'm still far from sure what's going on. You play the part of Brick Nash, ex war veteran, now a truck driver. You've just heard from your kid brother Andy, a new recruit, who is justifiably concerned because he and his chums are about to be deployed 1000 yards from an above ground atomic test. You leap into a hijacked truck (containing plutonium!) and speed to the rescue. Unfortunately, the new breed of ant is rather partial to a nice bit of plutonium, and they leap on the truck, knocking you unconscious.

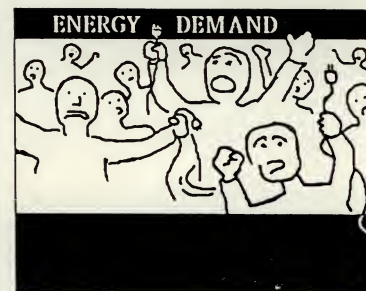
This is where the game begins, on the first of January 1956. Many of the same townsfolk are still around, but things are worse than before – not only is the blast set to wipe Lizards Breath away forever, but the ants have evolved a sort of intelligence, and are slowly taking over the minds of the humans! And just what *is* that mad Doctor doing in the hospital basement? Is there anyone I can trust, or are they all **Antheads** by now? And with the G-men on my trail, how long can I escape?

All the **It** sequences are still present in **Antheads**, plus one or two surprises which I certainly *won't* be revealing. If this was a full price sequel, I would probably be panning it mercilessly, on the grounds that it was too similar to **It**. More varied graphics and a complete new

soundtrack would have been nice, but at the lower price it is a decidedly nifty set of data disks for the original **It** (though I still think that it would have been nice if they'd warned you on the box cover that in addition to **It**, you'll need a couple of blank disks and 20 minutes or so free time in order to produce a playable version of **Antheads**). A purely personal grouse is that my version had a fairly major bug which screwed up the graphics in one of the arcade sections, but I'm sure that yours will be fine.

In conclusion: get a 1 meg memory, and another drive if possible. Then get **It Came From The Desert**. Then, if you want another shot at the big creepies, get **Antheads**. You won't regret it.

John Scott



tion is not always so linear as in the example given.

Each turn represents five years. To save Mother Earth you have precisely nine turns. After each turn you get a points score from the results screen and an analysis of where you are going wrong, or more improbably, right. There is, therefore, no objective score against which you can measure your performance, only your last effort at world salvation.

BALANCE OF THE PLANET

DESIGNED BY
CHRIS CRAWFORD

PUBLISHED BY
ACCOLADE

PRICE £39.95

RATING: 8

GRAPHICS: 8

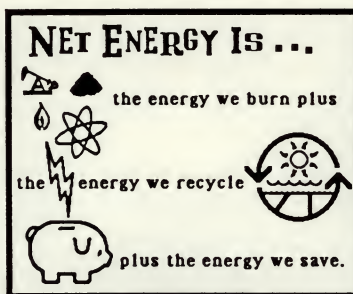


Available for the
PC. Runs off Hard
Disk only.

What a year this is: Douglas beating Tyson, Blackpool getting relegated, and now right wing games designer Chris Crawford coming over all green with this new release. Why, there's even a quote from (In)Fidel Castro on one of the screens! Suddenly, green, not greed, is good. Cynics will no doubt sneer and see this game as an opportunist rip off, but whatever it is, it sure ain't that.

SCREEN TEST

As now seems to be the case with the new generation of chunky American games, the manual weighs in over 130 pages. Thankfully, though, only four of these need detain you in your immediate mission of saving the planet. Your first destination in this momentous task is the 'Policy Summary' screen where you will observe in one column the taxes for the next five years, and in the other, the eco subsidies. The key to the game is restruc-



turing these figures in such a way that we can all breathe easy, literally and metaphorically. In short, number crunching with a vengeance. The transcendental factor here is the wealth of information available on the 150 screens provided. The program opts for the 'one screen leads to another approach'; to find the cause of, say, skin cancer, you click on 'cause' of the disease which will take you into Ultra Violet Light, continuing in the same manner will lead you into the Ozone, Stratospheric and Tropospheric CFCs (chlorofluorocarbons to you), and finally to the culprit: CFC Production. You *could* increase CFC taxes, but while this will lead to decreased production, it could also cause an industrial crisis if you raise them too high. Many of the causes and effects are interrelated, so the solu-



SUPER THROWAWAY SUN

The stylised messages on each screen advising of all the nasties around us are superbly rendered while the content strikes just the right note: neither hectoring or patronising. The accompanying artwork by the aptly named Amanda Goodenough is a real joy to behold, especially for those tired of animated blobs prancing around the screen. Ms Goodenough's style is primitive and childlike (but never childish) and complements the subject matter perfectly. Perhaps because of all the aforementioned, it's difficult to view **Balance of the Planet** as just a game. However, a game it most certainly is, and all you fans of logarithms, algorithms, and Cuban rhythms, will be pleased to hear that the program comes with a sort of 'mission builder'. With this, you are able to set different biases according to your particular prejudice. So if you think, for example, that Nuclear Power is wonderful because we'll end up getting great sun tans, you simply reduce the appropriate bias level within the parameters allowed by the program.

The heavy handed humour in the manual gets to be a bit wearing, but otherwise it is a fine and comprehensive effort which shows that Crawford is not afraid to confront many of the ethical questions this game raises. You'd have to be a right plonker not to find **Balance of the Planet** fascinating in some way. Unfortunately there are an awful lot of plonkers out there.

Brian Walker

Sid Meier's

RAILROAD TYCOON

Escape To The Golden Age of Railroads, Where Your Imagination Decides The Fate Of A Nation

Big business. Tough decisions. Excitement, challenge and compelling attention to detail. *Sid Meier's Railroad Tycoon* delivers an entire era to your personal computer.

Sid Meier's Railroad Tycoon re-creates the golden age of railroads, giving players complete control of the economic resources of the Industrial Age, and the commercial struggles that would thrust the world into the 20th Century.

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But be careful. There are other tycoons out there — brilliant industrialists such as Vanderbilt, J.P. Morgan and Jim Hill — determined to crush you or brush you from their path.

Sid Meier's Railroad Tycoon. Build a nation your way.

MICRO PROSE
SIMULATION • 1987 • WARE

AVAILABLE FOR YOUR IBM PC
& COMPATIBLES.

CONQUESTS OF CAMELOT

DESIGNED BY
CHRISTY MARX

PUBLISHED BY
SIERRA ON-LINE

PRICE £44.99

GAME PLAY: 9

GRAPHICS: 9



PC only.

Would a student of the Arthurian legends expect a sympathetic interpretation from a couple of American comic book creators? Christy Marx's *Sisterhood of Steel* is not a comic that inspired me to buy a second copy. It looked good but its heart was crass. I expected no more of this, her first computer game. How wrong can a purist be?

It must be admitted that I do not entirely agree with Christy Marx's interpretation of the archaeological and historical sources about Arthur. But I do accept that it is plausible and that it would be impossible to knit all of the Arthurian threads into a single cloth. Those of us who seek the grail of a single cohesive Arthurian story must select those facets that appeal most to ourselves. Christy Marx is, clearly, deeply in love with the Arthur of Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, and has tried to tie this into her extensive knowledge of early medieval Britain.

The historical truth about Arthur is immaterial to our likely enjoyment of this game or, indeed, of any aspect of the Arthurian corpus. If we are to suspend disbelief all we need is an internal logic. Christy Marx has found that internal logic and reinforces it with a multitude of snippets of information about medieval European culture.

FORBIDDEN FRUIT

The game opens with a beautiful animated introduction to the Arthurian cycle. Britain has been blighted by the sin of Lancelot's forbidden love for Guinevere. Gawaine, Galahad and Lancelot have been sent out to find the Grail (the centre of sanctity and the hope of the kingdom) but have not returned. It is time for Arthur to prove that his strength is as the strength of ten. You are Arthur. Sitting in your fourteenth century mid-German castle with its ninth century map of south-

ern England in a fifth century landscape you must rescue your lost knights and recover the Grail.

You will visit the Lady of The Lake, joust with the Black Knight, talk to the Old Gods and travel to the Holy Land to fulfil your quest. And all of this will be done with the advice of Merlin at your call. Before you set out you must talk to the key people in Camelot and gather your equipment. Asking characters about the various subjects that may be of interest is very informative in this game.

The parser and the game control system in *Conquests Of Camelot* appear to be an intermediate version between *Leisure Suit Larry III* and *Code-Name: Ice-man*. There are still times when you will be told to 'move closer' in response to an unambiguous command but the graphic imagery is more subtle. The improved graphics could, of course, be the result of the undoubted skill of Christy Marx and her artistic partner, Peter Ledger.

Adventure games always heavily reflect the attitudes of their designer. It is very difficult to write an impersonal game of this nature (and, presumably, if you did the result would be a rather unsatisfying product). *Conquests Of Camelot* has a delicacy that is unusual in this field. There is little overt humour but a gentle wit pervades the game. The puzzles are

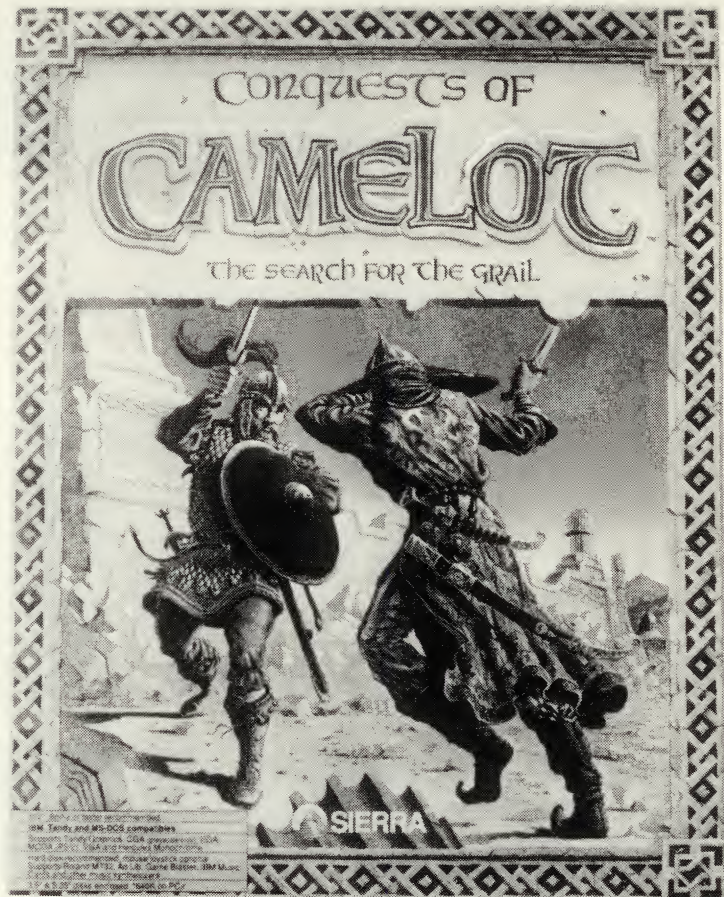
subtle and although I would prefer to skip arcade sequences such as the pig-sticking, the jousting and the single combat I recognise that this variation of pace enlivens the game.

LOVE IS MY SHIELD

As always with Sierra games, I wish that they would provide a version that exploited the VGA graphics mode (Very Good Artwork, for the non-technical) of the PC. The size of the characters in the last few games changes throughout so that some consistency is maintained between character and environment but there are few improvements remaining within the limits of CGA. It seems odd that Sierra should have made such a commitment to music synthesizer boards without making the equivalent enhancements to the look of their games. *Camelot*, with its pastiche medieval music soundtrack, actually sounds good through the unimproved PC speaker so I can hardly wait for an opportunity to play it though a music card.

But these grumbles are subservient to the core of the game. *Conquests Of Camelot* is a refreshing, challenging adventure game which should appeal strongly to those with a taste for medieval romance. Meanwhile, *Love Is My Shield*.

Theo Clarke



SORCERIAN

PUBLISHED BY
SIERRA ON-LINE & FALCOM

DESIGNED BY
A CAST OF THOUSANDS

PRICE £34.95

GAME PLAY: 6

GRAPHICS: 6



PC only.

Sorcerians are the earthly descendants of godlike beings who seek to overthrow evil. Evil takes the form of many monsters and the fights are physical rather than spiritual. There is that familiar fantasy role-playing aura about this game: Choose to be a fighter, a wizard, a dwarf or an elf. Choose your sex. Choose one of the 60 occupations (what do you mean, you want your male fighter to be a hairdresser?). Go to town. Kit out your character. Generate a few more and kit them out too. Form a party and set off on your first adventure. Heard this one before? Either AD&D was an atavistic realisation of some human archetype or there is a paucity of imagination among rolegame designers.

RUNNING JUMPS

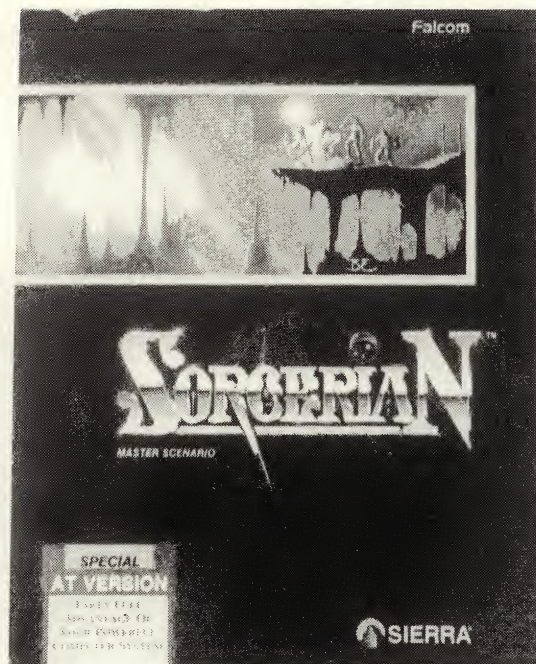
There are fifteen adventures to choose from (in three scenarios of five levels apiece). I chose the first level of the first scenario as my starting point. Cue music. My screen looked like an advanced version of Digger. And there at bottom left were the four members of my party: a row of brightly coloured sprites less than an inch high. I moved them about a bit. Movement was pretty fast but the animation was rudimentary. Onwards, into the

dungeon. There are no textual commands. Press the cursor keys to move left and right across the two-dimensional screen. Use the up arrow in tandem with the left/right arrows to perform a running jump. Press the up arrow alone to perform a standing jump. To take an object (or to look more closely at it) make a standing jump by the object. To open a door make a standing jump beside it. Got that?

Onwards again. Jump the leader at the first door. In we go. Down to the end of the corridor. It is a dead end but we do a standing jump just for fun and we 'find some sage'. Herbs are used to make spells so this a good thing. Let us look in this room here. Down the steps we find a wounded adventurer who gives us a few clues. Back outside we find some gnomes. Hold down the space bar to strike repeatedly with weapons. Hold down the spacebar until all the gnomes are dead. Stand still for a while (to get back to full hit points) then continue.

You may think that this sounds rather like an arcade game. Believe me, it looks like an arcade game. I decided that I might have missed some subtleties of the activities in the city. My party left the dungeon and found that a year had passed. A year passes even if they do no more than put their toes into an adventure and exit at once. Characters that are not on adventure during a year will receive revenue from their occupation (Hairdressers don't get a lot but bodyguards do). Training of any sort takes a number of years so one can choose to 'Advance Time' without adventuring. One of the points emphasised in the sales pitch is that characters age visibly. This is less exciting than it sounds. The addition of grey hair and wrinkles to a small EGA graphics display elicited little emotional response from me. Consequently I find it hard to credit stories of Japanese players being as amazed or grief-stricken as the copywriters would have me believe.

Despite the hype there is little realism in any aspect of the game. Visit the royal court and you will see a portrait of the King and a note of how many points you need to attain the next level. Go to the temple and



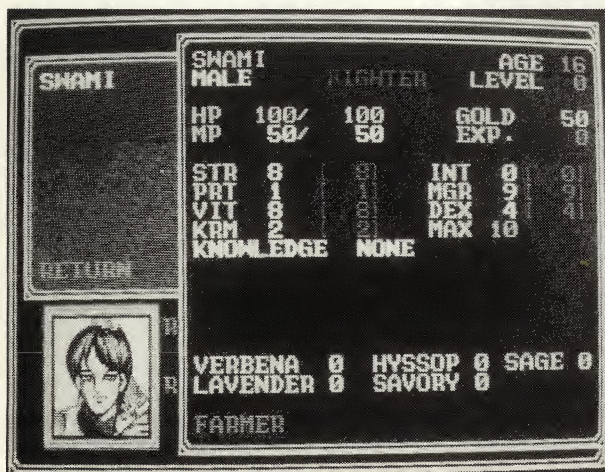
choose from a menu that offers you the options of praying, donating money or raising the dead. Pray often enough and you have a chance of bringing your dead team members back to life (if you have made a donation). The city activities are ancillary to the adventures but surely they could have been presented in a more interesting manner. Similarly, in the adventure scenarios there is no way of interacting with the creatures that you meet... except by jumping up and down beside them.

MUSEUM PIECE

Sorcerian has been the subject of a very hard sell by Sierra. Few Sierra enthusiasts can have failed to be aware that this was simply a translation of a game that had topped the Japanese sales charts for over three years. The pre-release marketing had made a big song and dance about the high quality of the graphics and the sound. It was emphasised that Nihon Falcom, the Japanese publishers of the game would only license the game if it was shipped for 16 bit machines with EGA graphics or better. The sound alone was supposed to merit mass attention.

To say that I was keen to see the game is an understatement. To say that I was disappointed is another. In retrospect, the key factor that I had overlooked was that a game has to be more than three years old to sit anywhere in the sales charts for that long. Sorcerian would have impressed me a lot five years ago. Now it looks like a well-preserved museum piece.

Theo Clarke



SECOND FRONT

DESIGNED BY
GARY GRIGSBY

PUBLISHED BY
SSI/US GOLD

PRICE £29.99

GAME PLAY: 9

GRAPHICS: 7



PC only.

Second Front is a strategic level game based on the Russian front of the Second World War. The basic scale is 20 miles to a hex (the hex grid is invisible but obvious) and the time scale is weekly turns covering a period from summer 1941 until the end of the war in summer 1945. The level of command is strategic with army level HQs controlling corp sized units. The game scale is similar to that of many previous computer and board games on this subject but the depth and detail in this game are very much a product of the considerable experience SSI bring to this subject and level of game. As you might expect, the game is a large one and even one of the short scenarios will require many hours of play to complete. Saving to disk is almost certain to be desired so players should have a blank formatted disk to hand.

The sequence of play is simple and familiar; the extra detail and depth has been added in a way that allows you to leave the computer (and the defaults) to worry about things like production. When you are comfortable with the game mechanisms you can start tinkering with the war effort of the side you are controlling.

The game loads simply with no disc access required once the game is underway and, in EGA mode at least, has clear and attractive graphics. The game offers options for zero, one or two players and three levels of balance. The ability to vary the side and balance for saved games gives a useful replay facility. There are four possible scenarios, a campaign from 1941 from 1945, a campaign from 1942 to 1945, a Stalin scenario and a Moscow campaign.

The turn sequence is phased, Axis then Soviet, with each phase breaking down as follows:

- a) Supply allocation, events and so on (computer control).
- b) General orders, movement and control options.
- c) Combat resolution (computer control).

PARTISAN ACTIVITY

The first actions performed in each phase are calculations of things like readiness and supply for each unit. The available replacement will be distributed according to the current rate for each HQ and corps. Various special features are performed at this time including partisan activity and events taking place on other fronts.

The general order section is the one which mainly concerns us. In this section, the player can examine each corp/HQ unit and set various options, these include transferring divisions between corps, setting the replacement rates for each formation and altering the attachments of corps to HQ. It is also possible to create new formations and to transfer units to other fronts in an effort to bolster them up and thereby improve the general course of the war.

Movement is divided into march moves, rail moves and plotted moves. The first two are self explanatory while the last is used when ordering units to move into enemy controlled hexes and also to attack enemy units. Air operations are also ordered in this section, a number of different missions are available including interdiction, escort, supply and several more. The Axis player will find airfield attack very valuable in the early part of the game and after 1943 the Soviet will have the USAAF forces in the Med to bomb the German oil resources.

Combat resolution is entirely under the control of the computer, using formulae shown at the back of the manual, with the option of seeing in detail how each formation performs.

Units strengths and capabilities are rated in a number of ways:

- a) Number of squads in formation.
- b) Equipment main type of vehicle.
- c) Experience.
- d) Readiness.
- e) Supply state.
- f) Commander quality.

These factors are altered by the player and also by the computer as a result of player and enemy action. During his order phase the player may add squads from the replacement pool and alter the equipment – upgrading formations as new types of tanks and planes become available. Experience is increased by combat but can be diluted by adding large numbers of new squads. Readiness is lost as a result of movement and combat, then regained as a result of rest. The rate at which readiness is regained is dependent on the supply level of the hex they occupy and is sometimes altered by the weather.

Supply state is calculated by the computer for each hex and is dependent on terrain, distance from rail heads, weather and HQs. Commanders are rated from 3 (Hitler) to 9 (Manstein). This rating affects combat by adding readiness and making units more resilient, that is, more able to stand combat losses and retreats before breaking up. Commanders can be replaced by the player and sometimes as a result of 'off board events' they will be withdrawn, sometimes never to return.

BICYCLE BATTALION

Overall, the game represents a valuable addition to the already large array of East Front computer games. It offers many of the features that have become familiar to board wargamers over the past years. The level of detail that it offers is great and is presented in a way that does not overwhelm the player. This means that players will be able to get into the game much more easily and also makes it more suitable for the novice player than you might expect for a game of this sophistication.

I cannot make any real assessment of the quality of the opposition that the computer puts up beyond saying that in the first few months of the campaign the machine does a better job of withdrawing into Mother Russia than I did. The size of the simulation means that a considerable investment in time will be required of the player(s). When I play a game of this scale I often regard the level of control with some dismay; many games seem to end up allowing the front commander to control every bicycle battalion. Thankfully, with **Second Front** SSI have avoided this.

Gary Bolton

HARPOON

or, how to catch your whale without losing the ship

Harpoon is one of the most detailed simulations of modern naval warfare ever to appear in any form. In the first of a series on software strategy, Frank Dunn deciphers the menus.

Scouting or finding the enemy before they find you is the essence of modern naval operations. One play through of the first Greenland Iceland UK BattleSet scenario reinforces the lesson which is amplified through all the Harpoon BattleSets. It doesn't matter how good or long ranged your assets (ships, submarines or aircraft) are if they do not have a known target to attack. So the first step is to determine where the threats are likely to come from, which groups you need to protect, and what you have available to detect possible attacks. Always read the scenario orders for clues as to what the enemy will gain a victory for, as this helps

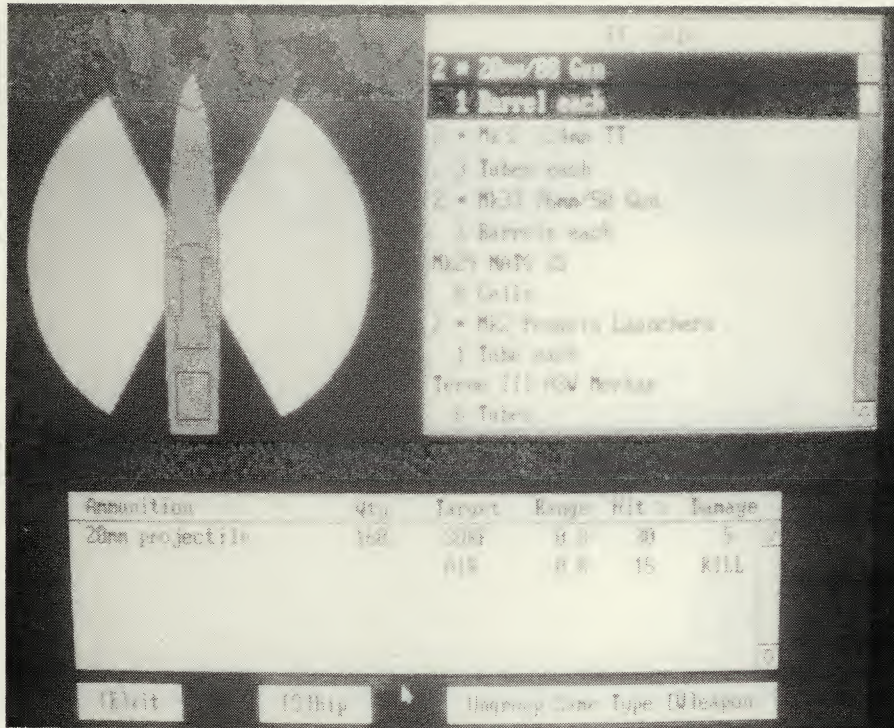
to sort out your defensive and offensive priorities.

AIR TODAY

Much of the game turns around the correct handling of your aircraft. They offer speed and repeatability of tasks unlike ships and submarines, which are slow and have a limited capacity as regards missiles. Bases (Airfields and Ports) are simply fixed targets that are either near the enemy and thus vulnerable, or not that near and less prone to attack. The same goes for aircraft carriers, with the major exception that they are mobile and are

This article is based on version 1.11 of the game. If you do not have that version nor 1.1 then get the upgrade from whomever you bought it from as earlier versions released in the UK have some problems with memory usage and the odd fatal, but irregular, bug or two. Highly recommended is a mouse and a hard disc to run it from as the user interface is optimised for mouse use. The speed of the game relies to some extent on retrieving portions off the disc to minimise memory problems. Ideally as much memory as possible should be made available to the game, so if you can load your mouse or display driver into high memory (that is, memory above 640K) then this is a good thing. One tip: if you type Alt f6 then the remaining memory will be displayed in the group window.





often close to ships that you wish to protect, or targets that you want to attack with the aircraft they have on board. The scenario victory conditions impose a grand strategic framework within which you have to work. So having a rough list of threats and targets spend some time in the group map checking out the group courses and formations that the game starts with.

Use the Alt f2 key to toggle the unit or group call signs when you are not sure of IDs on either map (see also the manual supplement p57), Alt f1 is the same as Ctl Q, in other words Quit, while Alt f3 grants immediate nuclear release! It's also worthwhile early on, as you step through the formations, to alter the sector sizes to ones you'll want to use throughout the scenario.

As NATO, the greatest threat to you are the land based Badger and Backfire bombers that carry the Kingfish missile, which has a 250 mile range. A quick check in the formation editor shows that the maximum range a patrol can go out to is 255 miles; obviously not a great deal of use if you are relying on early warning patrol planes such as the E-3 AWACS or Hawkeye to detect incoming raids. So once the early warning patrol is set in the formation editor, and the plane is airborne, use the split group option to get it on the group map then plot a course for it. The likely axis threat will be at high altitude with all its sensors on. Once it's far enough out – about 600 miles plus for the E-3 – then order it to loiter. Any incoming raid should then be detected early enough to make sure that your fighter patrols can intercept the bogies

before they launch the dreaded Kingfish. If that fails and the raid launches missiles then the next best option is to get all your aircraft off the base or carrier and set up any remaining fighters as far out as possible in line with the incoming missiles. They will attempt to shoot down any missiles that come within their kill range, but make sure that their sensors are on and that they are along the same bearing as the missiles. You cannot designate missiles as targets in most cases, although it's not unknown for the program to offer a Nimrod anti-submarine plane the chance to intercept one!

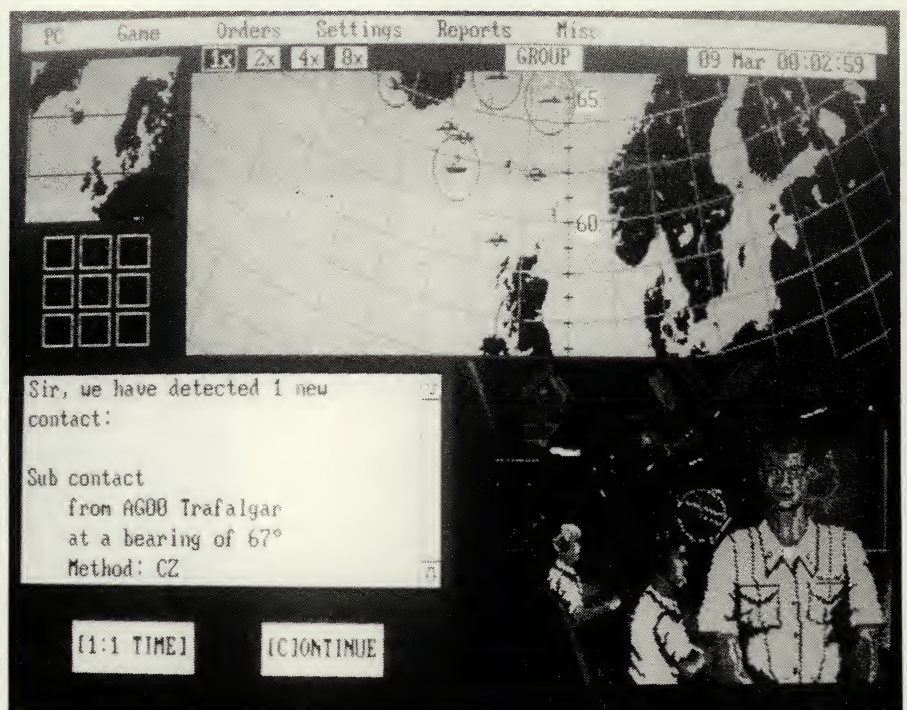
One variant on this method is when a submarine fires a long range anti-sub-

marine weapon and you have fighters close at hand; try to get the fighters in line with the weapon while it's still airborne. With luck they will attempt to engage it with missiles. It is not unknown for the Soviets to try this attack repeatedly against a NATO submarine, so keep the fighters in between the two submarine groups.

DUMB WAITER

As an opponent, the computer is a fairly dumb beast that goes after easy targets but shies away when it realises (detects) that it's up against more than it bargained for. Another characteristic is that it is not sensible in its targeting when using irreplaceable ship launched missiles. Take advantage of this after all the initial threats have been disposed of and you are on the offensive. Now is the time to change the loadout of your dual purpose fighters like the Hornet – you did put most of them to air to air at the start didn't you? – to standoff or anti-radar.

When you have the big strike ready make sure that an early warning aircraft has radar coverage of the target to keep track of any defending fighters. Launch the strike in at least two groups, the first being the attackers with the longest range weapons available and anti-radar weapons as well plus any electronic warfare aircraft, the second being fighters which will screen the main strike group. Make sure that the fighter group is 50 miles or so in front to allow for time in case of any stiff opposition before you play dodgems with the target's surface to air missiles. Note that if the target hasn't been kept track of then the range of its defensive missiles will not be displayed, so you will



quickly lose planes that have strayed into range to unseen fire.

In fighter v fighter combat the principles are simple: get as high as possible and fire first. The Tornado F3 excels in this respect as at high altitudes little can touch it, while it can engage at 27 miles. A neat variation on what one player has called sandbagging is to put one group up high with its radar on and then stack large groups at low level with their radars off. The computer goes for the detected group at high and fails to spot the low groups until it's too late. To wear down the defensive power of the target fly into its range and as soon as you see a missile launch do an 180 degree turn and hit the afterburners. Repeat this several times and they will run out of missiles making it an easy kill for the main strike now in its final run in.

ON THE SURFACE


In the surface based scenarios the same principles apply. Use land based aircraft to cover possible submarine threats close to shore and ship based helicopters to screen the task force(s). Don't forget that the game doesn't keep track of logistics, so be quite free with the ferrying of planes from a base that the action has moved away from to one that's nearer. They will always have a complete range of weapons available to them at any base. Likewise you can always forward base carrier based planes as well.

As helicopters do not have the range of planes, make sure some are kept on 'ready to launch' in pairs at newly detected submarines. Use longer ranged ones such as the Sea Hawk, Lynx or Sea King singly as search platforms on the group map. Always offset them from the launching group before they turn their radar on at medium altitude or else you might give away your position. Lacking planes, the missile dodgem trick isn't available as helicopters are too slow and short ranged to contemplate using.

There is a great temptation to launch longer range weapons such as Tomahawk at newly detected surface groups. In general it's not worth the loss of the strike power as often they will be bearing only solutions (an elongated diamond marks their probable location) or area solution (a fat diamond) leaving the Tomahawks open to early detection and destruction when they turn their guidance radars on. If you have submarines nearby then vector them onto the enemy to act as tattletales. But beware that large Soviet groups often have an escorting submarine close by. Close to the enemy until within range of the majority


of your anti-ship missiles such as Harpoon and Tomahawk. Before that, however, enter the formation editor to optimise the disposition of your good anti-air ships like the Ticunderoga, Leahy and Belknap classes. Put them in sectors up the threat axis outside of the main body so they can engage as many of the inevitable incoming missiles as early as possible, though you will still lose ships as some missiles leak through the layered defences. Don't counterfire until the major enemy units have been identified by your submarine(s) or helicopters. Target the opposing anti-air ships such as the Kirov and Slavias to lessen the price of entry for your later strikes against the other major units. But take note that in the North Atlantic Convoys (16 scenarios) BattleSet, the Kalinin and Baku appear with enhanced systems compared to the earlier Kirov and Kiev classes. If helicopters in the forward screen of the formation suddenly start disappearing the obvious cause will be that they are now within enemy anti-air range, pull them back or land them before you launch Harpoons. Time any submarine attacks to coincide with your surface strikes: this stretches the target group's defences over two boundaries thus making it react to two different but deadly threats.

Because it's an excellent simulation, almost all the tactics that are practised for real usually work in the game. Moreover it's amenable to any variation thought up, but don't forget that the computers play leaves at lot to be desired and should be one priority area for 360 to improve as much as possible as more BattleSets are released. Once a certain proficiency is reached, the bigger scenarios are only more daunting because the enemy has more assets to throw at you – it doesn't play any better.

June should see the US release of a scenario editor which will allow you to build a scenario using the units within one BattleSet – some 110-130 units in total. Later in July the 3rd BattleSet covering the Mediterranean will be released. Further than that some future releases may be a Second World War carrier game, a modern land game *à la Assault* and finally *Harpoon II* but to date these only exist as rumours. Finally my undying gratitude goes to all in the Gamers forum on CompuServe who have over the last few months have discussed *Harpoon* tactics with boundless enthusiasm. 

Harpoon is published by 360/Mirrorsoft, price £39.99.

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

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COVER FEATURE

Railroad tycoon

DESIGNED BY
SID MEIER & BRUCE SHELLEY

PUBLISHED BY
MICROPROSE

PRICE £34.99

RATING: 10

GRAPHICS: 10



PC only. No other versions planned at the present time.

Despite what advertisers would have you believe, there are few products in the world which actually change your life. However, if you include divorce as significantly altering your chosen destiny then the addictive qualities of **Railroad Tycoon** make it one such rare offering.

'He left me for a railroad game, your honour,' she cried. Ironically the game itself is a marriage of sorts: Avalon Hill's 1830 tying the knot with Maxis's **Sim City** to produce a wondrous offspring, a **Railroad Tycoon** no less. Strung out along the family tree we find **Empire Builder**, **Railway Rivals**, and, at the root of it all, a heavy sprinkling of model railroading.



In other words, a game that is a steam buff's (and gamer's) dream. If this all sounds too good to be true, then read on.

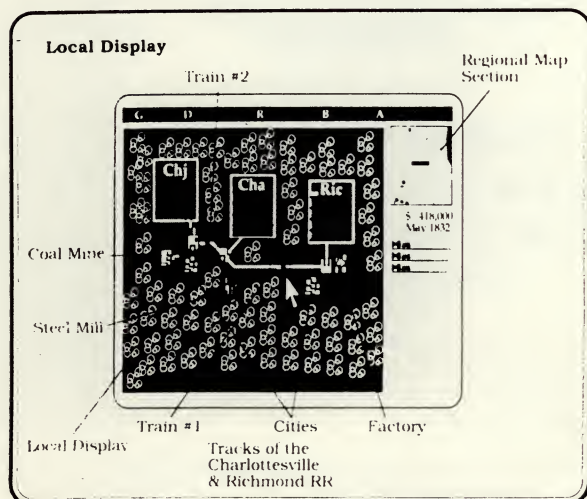
WE'RE GETTING THERE

The first thing you must do before you hear that lonesome whistle blowing is study the manual – yet another 200 page plus beautifully produced offering from Microprose, much of which is required reading should you wish to succeed in the game. You can, however, skip most of it if you just want to 'play trains'.

play on: Eastern USA, Western USA, UK, or Europe. The starting period varies according to the area used, but whichever area is chosen the time limit of 100 years (if you last that long) remains the same. Your objective is to make your railroad company more profitable than those run by your three computer opponents. The names of these characters will cause speculation of a different kind to that encouraged by the game. Who would have thought, for instance, that Vladimir Lenin was once not only the President of the Canterbury and Dover Railway, but a wheeler dealer share trader to boot?

Before starting the game as such, you must set the level of difficulty; I would strongly recommend that even the most experienced of gamers start off on the basic level. Not because the game is mind bogglingly complex, but more that there is a lot of information and different factors to absorb. Once the level is set you must choose which map you want to

Victory is ultimately achieved not only by share dealing (though this plays a part), but by sound operational management. A somewhat bland job description, but one that includes everything you can think of in running a railroad and then some. The first activity you undertake is to lay track, usually aiming to connect two cities and build stations in each. All this is achieved by keyboard commands, or (optimally) mouse clicks. Once a route has been established you purchase engines, the choice of which is determined by the period you are in (mostly they are historically accurate). By clicking on the stations, or by scanning the resource screen,



you are able to see the supply and demand of the various locales and allocate your rolling stock accordingly. The revenue obtained for deliveries varies according to distance, the economic climate, and the speed of delivery (especially for mail).

Once your train has left the station, you'll see your train and its load, puffing its way along the track you have just built. On the right of the screen you'll find the train roster which shows all the trains owned by your railroad together with their current (relative to each other) speed, load, and destination. Profits are maximised by having the right train in the right place at the right time, and with the right rolling stock.

Occasionally a 'priority delivery' will pop up offering a gradually decreasing bonus. This is a really nice touch, as it forces the player to scramble his schedules in order to make the delivery as quickly as possible. One such delivery was as follows: 'CHAMPIONSHIP SOCCER MATCH - Wine to be delivered from Lille to Amsterdam'. Clearly this is a game with its finger on the pulse of things.



STATION TO STATION

Every two years you receive a fiscal report so you can see how your railroad is progressing and also check the stockholders' level of satisfaction. If your share price suffers consistent falls, then they'll start looking for another president. Even if your share price goes up, they'll still get cranky if the rise isn't big enough (5% minimum), at which point it might be a good idea to ditch them, put the company in receivership and run it from there.

The rate of interest should always be checked carefully as your company is partly funded on bonds. Make sure these rollover at the most advantageous time. The reports you receive are not just there for show. They will provide valuable information as to where, if anywhere, your company is faltering. Maintenance costs especially should receive your attention. At this juncture you also get to see how the other railroads are functioning. You are able to buy stocks in these at any point in the game.

Control is obtained the moment you acquire a 60% holding. Likewise, if you hold 50% of stock in your own company you can never be fired by the other stockholders. A way to 'get at' the price of your competitors' shares is to launch a station war, or 'rate war' as the game describes it. This is activated by building into one of your rivals stations. War is then de-

Financial Summaries

Leeds & Bradford RR Track 374 miles Net Worth \$ 3,650,000 Public: 120,000 Treasury: 20,000	Cash \$ 673,000 Bonds \$ 500,000 Stock at \$ 58.00 per share	
George Stephenson's Whitehaven & Kendal RR Net Worth \$ 960,000 Public: 0,000 Treasury: 50,000 L&B: 50,000	Cash \$ 488,000 Bonds \$ 1,000,000 Stock at \$ 13.00/share	
Erastus Canning's Macclesfield & Birmingham RR Net Worth \$ 3,610,000 Public: 120,000 Treasury: 40,000 L&B: 40,000	Cash \$ 2,367,000 Bonds \$ 0,000 Stock at \$ 56.00/share	
Daniel Drew's York & Harrogate RR Net Worth \$ 1,280,000 Public: 0,000 Treasury: 0,000 L&B: 100,000	Cash \$ 401,000 Bonds \$ 1,000,000 Stock at \$ 17.00/share	

Interest Rates (Boom) 3%

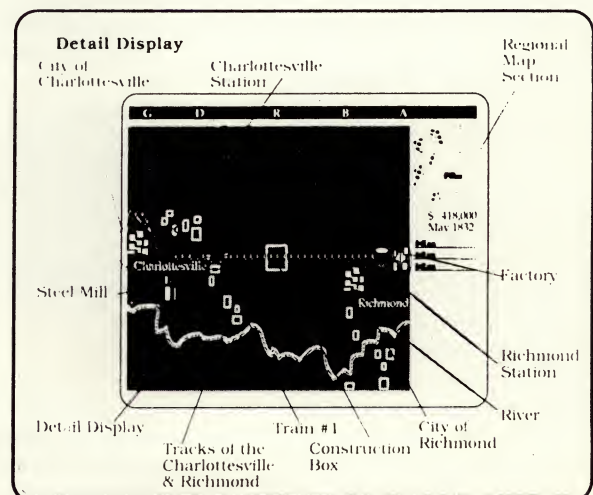
clared. The winner is the player who delivers and picks up the most goods to and from that station within two fiscal periods. The loser has to get out of Dodge and his share price drops accordingly. Apart from the strategic element, such 'wars' are exciting and great fun to behold. In the basic game the other companies never try to attempt a takeover, however, as you move up a few levels the game develops a quite vicious edge as stock changes hands at an alarming rate. Another advanced option is the dispatcher mode. In this you control all the signals. The brain aches just thinking about it. Fortunately a 'freeze game' option is provided so that you may take time out while studying the various possibilities.

TRANS EUROPEAN EXCESS

For once the graphics and the game play are of a similar quality. The attention to detail is quite remarkable. When you build a bridge, for example, you not only witness the construction, but also get to see the chief engineer walking across it to test it in the time honoured manner. Similarly, when you buy an engine a graphic replica appears. Motive power includes everything from a Grasshopper to the TGV - the latter comes out of the shed humming like a Moog synthesizer. My personal favourite, though, is the A4 class, which used to ply its trade on the LNER, and which

includes the steam world record holder *Mallard*. Hitching this to the Stuttgart-Munich express may be historically inaccurate, but what a thrill. The maps themselves are massive. So much so that the constant scrolling is something of a problem, especially when you want to see the relative distances for building purposes. Paper maps would have been nice but maybe I'm being greedy.

Nobody is going to buy a game (or not) because of the sound effects, but nevertheless they are worth mentioning here. As usual, the IBM sound is like listening to a man with whooping cough being strangled, yet strangely enough this is far more evocative of the Golden Age of Steam than the synthesised musings of Jeffrey Briggs, accessed via an Ad Lib sound board. Surely a bit of sampling would not have gone amiss here, even at the expense of synchronisation? Whatever you listen to you are looking at about 40 hours solid playing time to complete a



100 year game cycle, and even then you would have only covered a fraction of the map. The option to explore uncharted territory, though, is one of the many delights of the game.

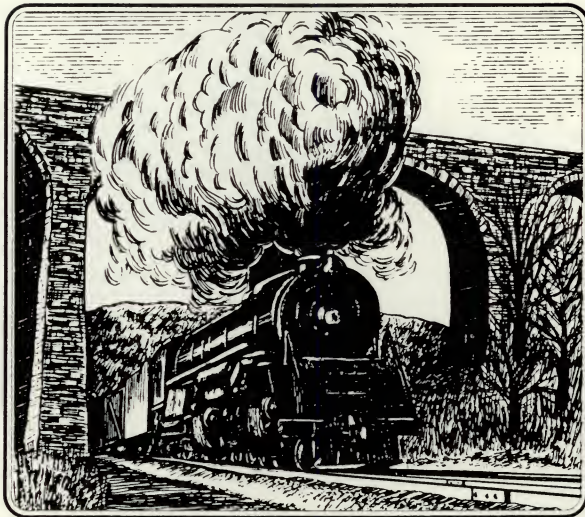
Four game saves are possible per disk. I would recommend saving every couple of hours. Lock-ups are always enraging but nowhere more so than in a game like this. Upon retirement (or dismissal) your performance is evaluated in two ways: the first uses the Sid Meier Job Creation Scheme previously seen in *Pirates* – if you do a good job you could become President of the United States. However, if you perform like British Rail you are offered a job as a hobo, so you could find yourself sleeping rough on a station that you had constructed. The second evaluation is more realistic: an equation involving the total value of your railroad, difficulty level on which you were playing, length of service, and cause of departure. All these factors are crunched to produce a retirement bonus. Although it doesn't say so in the manual, I can tell you that the maximum bonus is \$10m and believe me, you'll have to go some to collect this (this information comes courtesy of co-designer Bruce Shelley, not because I got anywhere attaining that figure).

It may sound corny (but what the hell) to say it, but as you watch the trains whizzing up and down, study the stock reports, and build stations, you are left wondering how they put it all together. It's like Merlin waved his wand and decreed: 'There shall be a railway game, the like of which has never been seen before'. Certainly this is one of the most captivating games I've ever played. It therefore may appear churlish to ask for more in what must be the most comprehensive game ever on its chosen subject, but an old railroad man like myself wants everything. For example, I would have liked a multi player option, but apparently the technical problems involved proved insurmountable. A pity, because like all the good things in life *Railroad Tycoon* is something you'll want to share.

Brian Walker

At the time of going to press, we understand that Microprose are considering launching a variety of expansion disks for the game. These include a 'design your own map' option and also map disks for countries such as India and China. However, it should be stressed that the release of these modules is unconfirmed.

Sid Meier's
**RAILROAD
TYCOON**™
MICROPROSE™



Notes of an old railroad man

Bruce C Shelley

Assisting Sid Meier with the design and development of *Railroad Tycoon* for MicroProse was the most interesting game project that I've been involved with in a 10 year career in games. There are three reasons for this. Firstly, working with Sid is fun, interesting and stimulating, regardless of the topic. I consider him to be MicroProse's Walt Disney, and I have the greatest respect for his ability to capture the fun of a game idea and rapidly get the concept into a playable format.

Secondly, I have been personally interested in railroads for many years. I have a large collection of books, magazines and games about railroads that proved quite useful for *Railroad Tycoon* research. And finally, I generally enjoy games with heavy economic overtones.

1830

As mentioned in the designer's notes of *Railroad Tycoon*, the seed for our game came from playing Avalon Hill's *1830*, designed by England's own Francis Tre-

sham. When I joined MicroProse in early 1988, I mentioned that I had helped develop *1830* and considered it one of my favourite games. We scheduled it for one of our MicroProse gaming sessions, and it became a regular favourite.

I think at this time Sid began thinking of the possibility of a railroad game and he eventually put together a prototype model railroad builder program.

In early 1989 a second major influence appeared: *Sim City* by Maxis Software. This game generated a lot of interest in our offices, and inspired me as a way to make a railroad game work. I worked up a five page proposal for a railroad game that I hoped would give the player much more 'hands on' operation than *Sim City* did. Although this proposal did not start any fires it kept the idea alive.

In August of 1989 Sid went to the beach for a two week vacation, and when he returned he brought back a working prototype of the game that would become *Railroad Tycoon*. It's difficult now to remember what the prototype was like, but some essential features were there, including engines and cars, one day's

operations representing a full year, and the railroad construction process.

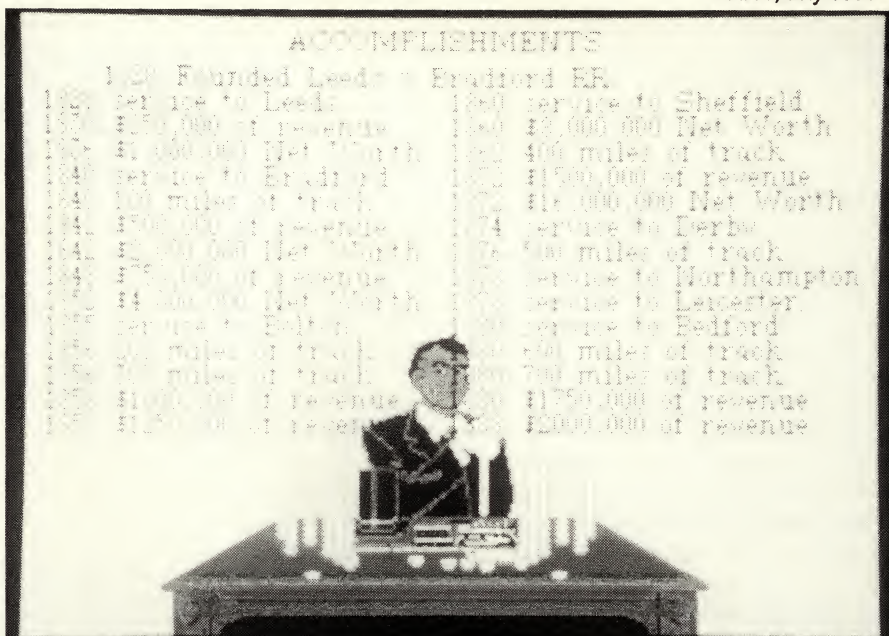
We continued to experiment with **Railroad Tycoon** trying to decide whether the project was a go or a bust. We got stuck a couple of times, such as when we were routing all trains by programming switches to let certain trains go one way or another (limited fast freights to the left, local fast freights to the right), but no hurdle proved too difficult.

For most of 1989 the procedure was that Sid would give me a new version in the morning (he normally puts in several hours at home at night). I would play during the day making notes about what was good, what was bad, what else would be worth including, and so on. Usually every afternoon we would discuss what we both had discovered playing that day, and these discussions would be translated by him into new code and features by the next day's version.

When ideas seemed to lag, we dreamed up 'road trips' for the team that by October included our artist, Max Remington. Our first trip was to the Strasburg Railroad for a steam train excursion and visit to the Pennsylvania Railroad Museum. Next was the Smithsonian and a National Geographic railroad exhibit, then the B&O Railroad Museum, and finally every model train store in the area. These trips were great fun, good for morale, and really provided inspiration.

MAPPED OUT

This was an exciting time, and team morale was high. The game was changing every day, little by little, becoming a richer and more interesting experience. We knew, or at least hoped, we were building a great game, and it was moving along very quickly. I remember feeling that we were on the leading edge of game design. I had this sense that we were



building the best game under way anywhere in the world, and that no one could possibly be doing anything better.

The original **Railroad Tycoon** game was played only in the northeast United States – nearly the same map area modelled in 1830. As we progressed, the idea for additional maps came up and Sid felt he could handle the programming required. This led to the western US, then England and Europe. The decision to take Europe into the late 20th century came late in the project, but helped give each of the four worlds a distinctive flavour.

The choice of locomotives was mostly left to me, so if you have a gripe about your favourite type being left out, you know who to write to. The heavy emphasis on English locos came about because the European map was the last addition. I was also responsible for making the maps and choosing which cities to include. That explains the presence of Elkhart, Indiana, the site of some important New York Central shops where my great grandfather worked for many years.

As I write this piece in late May, **Railroad Tycoon** has been on the shelves in the US for only a week or two. The early response has been very favourable, and I'm pleased to learn that your editor is enjoying the game. In conversation Brian raised two points about the game that he would like to have seen. First, he wanted a multi-player option. We never considered this, mainly because of the difficulty

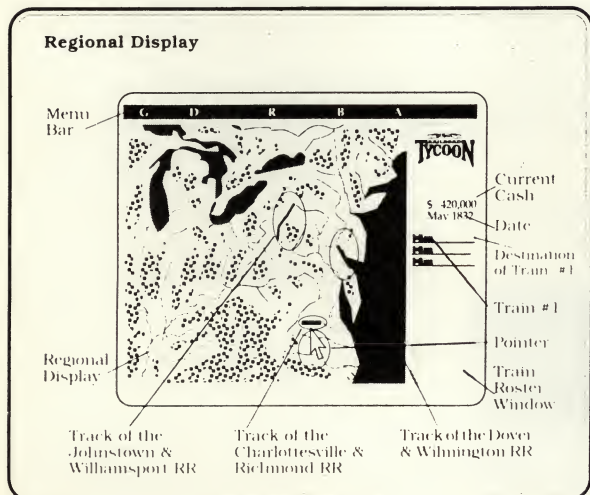
of arranging play. One player could build halfway across the map while the other studied stock prices. There was just no easy way to get over the real time dilemma.

He also wanted to be able to print off the maps so they provided a permanent record of his achievement. We never considered this, but it can be done with a camera utility program. When preparing the manual I captured screen shots at various points while setting up the tutorial railroad. Once these screen shots were printed on a laser printer, our artists could duplicate the shot in freehand for manual illustrations. You can use the same type of utility to capture any of the displays.

Railroad Tycoon was completed in approximately seven months, faster than any major game project in MicroProse history. I believe this is mainly a tribute to Sid's extraordinary skills as a game designer and programmer. Sid, Max, and myself also worked many long hours so that the game could be completed in time for a spring release. For example, the manual was written, illustrated, and laid out in two months of intense work.

At this time I can say that an expansion kit or second railroad game is being considered but no plans are being made until we can measure the response to this game. No conversions to other machine formats have begun, but if the original game format is a success conversions are likely to follow.

Sid, Max, myself, and everyone at MicroProse UK and USA are proud of **Railroad Tycoon** and believe you will find it entertaining, fun and even educational. **G**



LETTERS

Small press

I was very interested in Mike Jarvis's comments, especially concerning price, in his review of the **Call of Cthulhu** supplements which my company produced. Basically my situation can be described quite quickly; to produce 400 A4 copies of a product like the three Mike reviewed costs between £1000 and £1500, or £3500 for the three. Add in advertising and miscellaneous overheads, and the cost breaks down to around £4 a unit.

If I could guarantee selling most of the copies I produce within the space of a year or less, I could afford to look at a selling price of £6 or £7 for an overall profit of £2000–£3000 which in terms of the time and effort involved in putting things together still amounts to considerably less than £5 an hour. Obviously if I print 1000 copies or more, unit costs begin to drop dramatically, but absolute costs still increase.

With the wonders of modern communications technology at our collective disposal, I wonder at the possibilities of establishing some sort of mutually supportive network to try to address the problems of the small producer, but I'm not sure how I envisage the structure developing: perhaps through 'bundling' scenarios and so sharing costs and perhaps looking at larger print runs to reduce unit costs. There would also be a whole range of legal considerations that would have to be taken on board.

I'd be very interested in thoughts and ideas from any quarter. If anyone wants to write to me direct, I'll do my best to answer their letters promptly.

Tony Hickie

ADP Systems
37 Powis Place, Aberdeen AB2 3TS

Lost for words

With reference to your last issue #14 I should like to point out a mistake in your Do It Yourself article by Sid Sackson

'Combination'. The mistake is in the seventh paragraph when you start to explain the thinking used in the game. You start by explaining when to place the 3, 4, 10, 4 and 8, but only the 3, 4 and 8 are explained. The 10 and the last 4 seem to be lost somewhere!

Merfyn Lewis

Anglesey, N Wales

The mistake was the typist's, not Sid's. The paragraph should have read: 'Placing the 3 on space Ca creates an opening for a 4 on space Ba. The 10 which is next is placed on space Ac. Space Cc can now receive the 4 which follows, and the 8 can be placed on space Cc.'

Diplomatic plea

A healthy mix of general games, war-games, role-playing and computer games; rules for a deleted game, variants for an established game, and a new solitaire card game, plus all the regulars; GI 14 got it just right. It's a shame you've already had your poll, as I'm sure many would have voted this the best issue ever!

Concerning the poll, I note that **Diplomacy** was voted second favourite general game. Is there a possibility of it getting some coverage now? There's a thriving postal hobby out there, based on **Diplomacy** and variants, and also Manorcon, with the National Team Diplomacy Championship, to be held in July. Any chance of a report and a few pics?

Of course if you were to increase your **Diplomacy**-type games coverage, something else would have to go. I've always wondered at the logic of reviewing products which, by their nature, will be ruined if described in any detail; I refer of course to role-playing scenarios. A simple good, bad or crap would suffice here, leaving room for more 'real' games.

Ian Harris

Chester-le-Street, Co Durham DH2 1TQ

REBOUND

*It is because there is such a 'thriving postal hobby' and related fanzines, that we don't give **Diplomacy** much coverage.*

Origin of the species

I'm searching for the game **Evolution** by Pyramid Games which was reviewed in issue #4. I have tried several shops but without success. Do you know the address of the manufacturer?

Reinald Schlosser

Ziehrerstr 11, D-8906 Gersthofen, Germany

Sorry, no. This company appear to have devolved. Can any of our readers help?



Evolution: an extinct specie?

Jack the tripper

No sooner have I returned from my successful trip to promote **Save The President!** and **In The Money** at the American Toy Fair in NY and the GAMA show in Las Vegas and opened your esteemed organ (joke), than I find innumerable and abusive references to me and my products – so much so, that I appeal to your acknowledged sense of fair play (bigger joke) to allow me space to reply to those canards (*sure, ducky – Ed*). And where better to start than with Malcolm Smith's attack on the layout of the **Save The President!** games board (issue 13)? Coincidentally, *Games Gazette* – an excellent and informative journal but unlike GI, *objective* – in its review of **Save The President!** published in its current (April/May) issue, addressed this very point, as follows: 'The first impression is that the board is so highly colourful and bright that it is liable to bring on headaches . . . if stared at too long. Though once play begins and you

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Ealing, London W5 5DF

Or Fax: 081-579 6485



1830: sneaking into the Hall of Fame.

get to understand the reasoning behind the colourful approach, as well as getting intensely involved in the play, this impression pales into insignificance, is forgotten about, and only the mission ahead counts.' (Apart from betraying Mr Smith's hatred of public transport, the only implication of the letter is that he has never played **Save The President!**) . . .

Jack Jaffé

The UK's Leading Authority on Board Games
Games for Pleasure
London N12 8PY

This shameless attempt at self promotion has been edited. However, readers wishing to see the unexpurgated 1000 word diatribe can do so by sending us an SAE.

Outdoor games

Why is Avalon Hill's **Outdoor Survival** so popular (vide fourth item of News, issue 15)? I have always found the game tiresomely slow-moving. Am I missing some crucial facet of the rules or is there some virtuoso variant of which I am unaware?

Theo Clarke

London SE15 4AX

The first edition of Dungeons & Dragons advised punters to buy Outdoor Survival and use the gameboard as a sort of dungeon-by-proxy. Hence the reason for the game's massive sales.

Ancient tale

In issue #4 of your magazine you reviewed a game called **Ancients**, designed by Bill Banks and published by Good Industries in Colorado. I did as your article suggested and sent a cheque to the

address given, however, I have never received the game even though the cheque was cashed. I would still like to obtain a copy so I wonder if you could help by telling me where I could purchase one.

A J Dyer

Beckenham, Kent BR3 1TD

We have written to Good Industries to find out what is going on, as you don't say you have done this yourself. We would suggest trying Esdevium Games (see ad for address) if you still wish to buy the game.

Hall of shame

I think the magazine has a fairly good mixture and is really the only one with anywhere near decent coverage of general games. I just hope that computer games don't come to dominate, as apart from anything else this aspect of gaming tends not to be very interactive. Don't get me wrong, I have three computers and have been known to indulge in these anti-social habits, especially adventure games. However, an essential ingredient for balanced games is interaction between people (computers have an unfair advantage when you're drunk).

How did **Britannia, 1829, 1830, Ars Magica, and Dungeons and Dragons** insinuate themselves into the 'complete' Hall of Fame. Also, the review of **Hardball II** only gave it a gameplay of 9, hardly Hall of Fame standard, otherwise all the 5 star reviews from past issues would get in. On the same subject: what on earth is 'The Strat-O-Matic range'? Keep up the good work.

D W MacFarlane

Dumfries DG2 0QG


*We feel that computer games now offer an intelligent alternative solitaire option to board games. For those who still doubt the wisdom of this, read Bruce Shelley's excellent piece in this issue. It was early closing day at the 'Hall' the day we went to press so some would-be occupants got squeezed out, hence their emergence in our last issue. In any event, the Hall was not meant to be 'complete'. You are quite correct about **Hardball II** (what an observant chap you are). It should have been rated '10'. The 'Strat-O-Matic' range is a series of stats based (American) sports games, not dissimilar to Avalon Hill's 'Statis-Pro' games.*

Play it again, Sam

I enjoy your magazine very much, particularly the strategy seminars (although some, like the one on **Civilization**, spent too much time on explaining the game rather than the strategy). I think this type of article could be improved by going through a game move by move with notes explaining the significance of each, much as is done with chess games. The final of the recent **1829** championships at Longworth Hall annotated by the winner would be an interesting place to start (if someone saved the game score).

Michael English

Milton, Cambridge CB4 4DT

A tricky one, this. Providing such an article was written with flair it might work. Otherwise, it could be about as exciting as reading a combine harvester maintenance manual. We'd be happy to look at some submissions, though. 



Civilization: excellent strategy

Free classifieds

GI classified ads are free to private individuals, £1/word to commercial organisations.

AMATEUR POSTAL Diplomacy. Turns only 50p. Fast turnaround. Players of any experience welcome but all players must own **Diplomacy** boardgame. Startup: 50p + SSAE to: Joel Crawley, Rivendell, Main Rd, New Bolingbroke, Boston, Lincs PE22 7JU.

FOR SALE: Collector's items. 1975 SPI **Prestags, Yeoman, Viking, Spartan** tactical games. 1977 SPI **Middle Earth 3** game set based on JRR Tolkien's Ring Trilogy. ☎ 0772 732865 before August 1990 or write to Paul Regulski, 52 Greenfield Way, Ingol, Preston PR2 3GG.

FOR SALE: Wembley (1960s) – Ariel £10; **Formula 1** (1961) – Waddingtons £8; **Careers** (1965) – Parker £8; **Scoop** (1950s) – Waddingtons £7; **Subbuteo Table Cricket** – club edition (1967) £10; **Kan-U-Go** (1934) – Porterprint £6. prices exclude P&P. Paul Jefferies, 46 Towncourt Lane, Petts Wood, Kent BR5 1EH. ☎ 0689 34454.

ANYONE got a copy of **Anclents** (boardgame reviewed in GI #4)? Contact Dave, ☎ 081-673 5175.

FOR SALE Ironclads + expansion £25, **Lady Luck** £10, **Buck Rogers** £15, **Road to the Rhine** £15, **Tycoon** £5, **Hunt For Red October** £10, **Gulf Strike** £8 £15, **Firepower** £15, **Grand Army of the Republic** £10. **Military Modelling** magazine #1 to Mar 78, perfect condition – offers (post £15). **Armies & Weapons** #1 to #12 £2 each. Andy Daghish, 7 The Spinney, Cheadle, Cheshire. ☎ 061-428 5390.

WANTED: Pursue The Pennant and Pennant Race (AH) plus interest in other sports and wargames to buy or trade. Contact Ralph Eaglen, 30 Oxford St, Shephed, Leics LE12 9HU.

WANTED: Avalon Hill's **Outdoor Survival**. Neil, ☎ 0209 217066 or write to 141 Falmouth Rd, Redruth, Cornwall TR15 2QU.

ALMOST FREE Play By Mail: £2 set-up, money back guarantee, 25p and a stamp each turn covers all costs: city-states involved in diplomacy, trade, combat. Non-commercial PBM, but excellent, exciting. Computer moderated, 40+ page manual, maps etc. Bob McFarlane, 99 Pelham Road, Cowes, Isle of Wight PO31 7DN.

WANTED. Photocopy of rules for **Allen** by Kenner or **The War of the Daleks** by Denys Fisher. I would be very grateful if anyone could help: expenses refunded. Ted Herbert, 53 Stoke Road, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 7SP.

FOR SALE £6 each: **B-17; Onslaught** (SPI); **Gulf Strike** (Victory); **Chainsaw Warrior; Stock Exchange; Warlock of Firetop Mountain; Dracula** (GDW). £4 each: **AD&D Players, DM's, Mountain Manuals.** Jon Gilman, Porthdinllaen Farm, Morfa Nefn, Pwllhell, Gwynedd. + £1 P&P per item. ☎ 0758 721030.

FOR SALE: Traveller, Stormbringer, RQ3 games. Also **White Dwarf, Imagine, Adventurer, Fantasy Chronicles** magazines. SAE for lists to K Chapman, 21 Danum Avenue, Topcliffe Road, Thirsk, N Yorks YO7 1RU.

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FOR SALE: The Big Rubble, Cults of Terror, RQ Companion, Apple Iane and Griffin Mountain. Antony Chesney, ☎ 0742 667628 evenings, 0742 768555 xtn 4505 daytimes.

FOR SALE: AD&D modules & books, boardgames (including **SFB**), 25mm and 15mm historical and fantasy figures, microtanks and wargaming books. Send SSAE for full list to Lewis Jardine, 43 Windermere, Swindon SN3 6JZ.

WANTED Avalon Hill **Anzlo III** or IV edition. Rob, ☎ 041-773 1597.

PRINCE AUGUST MOULDS for sale. Good condition lightly used fantasy moulds + catalogues 1,2,3. All at £2.50 each, phone for details. Plus catapult mould £6 and dungeon builder set £5. Also Cthulhu floor plans. Mint condition from Games Workshop – now unobtainable £5. Buyer to collect or pay postage. ☎ 081-337 0608 after 7pm.

WANTED Cosmic Encounter (Eon products), and/or any expansion sets. Tom, ☎ 0895 74000 xtn 2285 (business hrs).

BRISTOL, Clevedon or Weston areas – are there any gamers or games clubs I could join. Wife is not interested (in games, that is!). ☎ 0272 878626 after 6pm.

RED . . . AMBER . . . A play by mail zine based on the popular **Speed Circuit** board game. The zine aims for a fortnightly turnaround (a minimum of 20 per year). Championships are over 12 different tracks from around the world, with drivers competing on 4 tracks at a time. Amateur run hence cost of £5 per 15 issues. Start up issue includes rules and A3 copies of tracks. Contact Jeff or Hazel Hawker, 52 Mercot Close, Oakenshaw South, Redditch, Worcs B98 7JX. ☎ 0527 543499.

RPGS FOR SALE or exchange: **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles** plus 3 supplements; **Call of Cthulhu** 2nd edition, boxed, complete, plus **Masks of Nyarlathotep** campaign pack. **Warhammer** 1982 edition, boxed. **Wanted: Kremlin, Junta, Shark, Waddingtons Black Box** or cash. PS Anyone interested in forming a games group (**Die Macher, Schoko, Acquire** etc) in Hitchin or surrounding area, contact Nik, ☎ 0462 433840 after 6.

KIRKWOOD fanzine is now available. The PBM reviews are detailed and unbiased. The RP section contains an essay on atmosphere creation in **CoC** games and an original **CoC** scenario. And this is just the beginning . . . Reserve your copy. Send £1.05 to: **Kirkwood** fanzine, Adam E Bodini, 40 Green Ridges, Headington, Oxford OX3 9PL.

FOR SALE: Campaign (1971) – Waddingtons, £8; **Seastrike** (1977) – Ariel's game of modern naval warfare, £8; **Escape from Colditz** (no date) – Parker, £5; **Judge Dredd** (1982) – GW, £7; **Quatre Bras** (Napoleon's Last Battles series, 1976) – SPI, £8; **Subbuteo Table Cricket** – original display edition (missing 2 of the 6 stumps and the ball) £10. Prices exclude P&P. Paul Jefferies, 46 Towncourt Lane, Petts Wood, Kent BR5 1EH. ☎ 0689 34454.

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WANTED: Avalon Hill wargames **Anzlo III** or IV edition. Robert, ☎ 041-773 1597

WANTED: Waddingtons **Starships, Grand Prix, Casper Games Mafloso, Ideal Abandon Ship, Pyramid Games Evolution, Miro** (Parker) **Situation**

4. Schlosser Reinald, Ziehrerstr 11, D-8906 Gersthofen, West Germany.

WANTED Thoughtwave and pre volume 14 Avalon Hill **General** magazines. Derick Green, 5 Gladwin Road, Colchester, Essex CO2 7HW.

WANTED. Orlon (Parker Bros, 1977), **Avalanche** (Parker Bros, c1970). Old puzzles: Think-a-Dot, Twiddle, Anchor stone puzzles, Instant Insanity/Tantalizer puzzles, puzzle boxes, Wit's End, Meba, Game Jugo etc. Non-standard Rubik Cubes. Books and magazines on puzzles and mathematical recreations eg **Soma Addict, Recreational Mathematics Magazine.** David Singmaster, 87 Rodenhurst Road, London SW4 8AF. ☎ 081-674 3676.

BROADSIDES AND BOARDERS. Any owners of this deleted MB Games title seeking purchaser look no further. Original cost £40? I will pay more + postage. Please write ASAP (with recent photograph) all letters answered, wife permitting, to Steve Hands, 23 Silver Street, Wythall, Birmingham B47 6LY.

INVENTOR requires an individual or company with money and a great deal of determination to be involved with the development of a new cue/table game up to 12' x 6', also a computer company to write the program for the above game. Mr R Renforth, 38 Drayton Road, Luton, Beds LU4 0PQ, ☎ 0582 602052.

SALE SALE SALE: clearance of 100+ board games – no reasonable offers refused. Large SAE to Jim Crawford, 11 Canon Court, Nevendon, Basildon, Essex. ☎ 0268 534002.

WANTED: Apocalypse/Warlord, Organized Crime, Square Mile. Jim Crawford, 11 Canon Court, Nevendon, Basildon, Essex. ☎ 0268 534002.

WANTED: BroadSides & Boarding Parties (MB), and **Conquest of the Empire** (MB) Good prices paid. Contact Richard Adams, 212 The Hides, Harlow, Essex CM20 3QT. ☎ 0279 444875.

HELPI I've just acquired Parker game **Moviemaker** at Boot sale – no rules. Can anyone help by sending me a copy of the rules? Peter Crawley, 'Rivendell', Main Rd, New Bolingbroke, Boston, Lincs PE22 7JU.

WANTED DESPERATELY: any issues of **Games & Puzzles**, and **Games Monthly.** Thomas, ☎ 0902 782469 after 7.30pm.

SUPERNOVA II (PBM Express) looking for contacts. Georg Buthe, Luetzenkirchener Str 137, 5090 Leverkusen 3, West Germany.

WANTED: Game of Ancient Kingdoms, Election, Dark Cults, Grand Prix (Waddingtons), **Evolution** (Pyramid), Wolfgang Lüdtke, 276 Granville Road, Sheffield S2 2RS.

WANTED DEPERATELY: Election, Stockbroker (Intellect), **Jolly Roger** (IT), **Mafloso** (Casper Games), **Warlock** magazine (GW), **Avlation** (Gibsons), **Stack** (B B Game), **World War 2** (Usborne Publ). Rudolf Rühle, Burgweg 33, D-5300 Bonn 1, West Germany.

MINIATURE WARGAMES magazines. Complete lot only £55, in W H Smith binders 1–20, 21–40, 41–53 plus 61 and 71. Buyer to collect or pay postage. ☎ 081-337 0608 after 7pm.

SPIELBOX

Bi-monthly German language games review magazine. Send DM 54.– (plus DM 9,80 if you want it sent air mail) for a one year – six issue – subscription to: Huss-Verlag GmbH, Joseph-Dollinger-Bogen 5, Postfach 46 04 80, D-8000 München 46, West Germany.

GAMES CLUBS

BEDFORD GLADIATORS Wargaming Association caters for all kinds of rolegames and wargames and meets Mondays from 7pm to 11pm at the BUSA club, The Broadway, Bedford. Contact Dave Wilkin ☎ 0234 857394.

BLACKROD Wargames Society have regular fortnightly meetings. All types of games are played including historical figure wargames, fantasy rolegames and board games. New members welcome with or without any previous experience. Contact: Trains & Things, 170/172, Chorley New Road, Horwich, Nr Bolton, Lancs. ☎ 0204 669203 or 691895.

BRITISH OTHELLO FEDERATION organises tournaments, chooses British champions to play in world championship team, produces instructive and entertaining newsletter twice a year. Contact David Haigh, 62 Romsey Road, Winchester SO 22 5PH.

CAMBRIDGE GAMES CLUB meets Wednesdays 7.30 to 10pm for board games, wargames, and rolegames at Milton Community Centre. New members (18+) welcome. Contact Michael English ☎ 0223 440781.

ERITH War Games Group meets twice a month on a Monday from 7 to 10pm. At Ashen Hall, Ashen Drive, Dartford. Contact Edmund, ☎ 0322 529804 or Jon, ☎ 04747 3759

EVERSHAM Role-play association. Established four years. Every fortnight, any games played. Contact Paul ☎ 0386 48202.

GAMES MEETING every Tuesday at the Bun Shop Pub, Berrylands Rd, Surbiton. 7pm till closing time. Wide variety of board games and role-playing games.

GLC (R.I.P.) Wargames Club now meets every Monday night at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1 (nearest tube Holborn). 6 till 10pm. Boardgames, Wargames, miniatures etc.

ISLE OF WIGHT Wargamers meet the first Sunday of every month. Contact Bob McFarlane, 99 Pelham Road, Cowes PO31 7DN. ☎ 294 191.

KCFFRPG, North London, have meetings every Monday, from 6.30pm to 9.45pm. If you're human, elf,

dwarf or just about any other race, and you're between 16 and 25, then contact us straight away. We play **AD&D, Rolemaster/MERP, Marvel Superheroes, Robotech, Call of Cthulhu** and other games. Experienced and non experienced players welcome. Contact Bill, Noami or Vince ☎ 01-253 6776. Or write to Darren Rogers, c/o KCFFRPG, 92 Central Street, London EC1V.

LOWESTOFT GAMES CLUB meets every Monday bight. Contact Steve Nichols, ☎ 0502 518625.

NEW MALDEN & SURBITON games group meets every other Monday at the Railway Hotel Pub, Coombe Road, New Malden, 7pm till closing time. Miniature figure wargames include Vietnam, **Warhammer 40K** and others. Board gamers and role-players welcome. Contact Peter ☎ 01-942 5624.

MANCHESTER BOARD WARGAMERS as featured in *The Wargamer*. All general and board wargames played. Meet 1st and 3rd Saturdays, 12-6pm, at St Christophers Church, Barrack Hill, Romiley, Stockport, Cheshire. Contact Andy, ☎ 061-428 5390 or Mike, ☎ 061-761 3570.

NIGI The Northern Ireland Gamers Association will be having regular meetings at Carrickfergus Library. All role-players and boardgamers are welcome. Meetings are held on the last Saturday of each month from 10.30am to 5pm. The aim of the association is to organise gaming in the province and to hold regular tournaments etc. For details contact Jim Johnston at 44 Hillcrest Drive, Newtownabbey BT36 6EQ. ☎ 0232 853730 (after six).

NOTTINGHAM AND DERBY Games Club meets every Thursday at the Queens Walk Community Centre, The Meadows, Nottingham. 7-10.30pm. Contact Mick Haytack ☎ 0332 511898.

SIGMA GAMES CLUB meets every 2nd, 4th, and 5th (if applicable) Sunday of the month at the Intervarsity Club, Bedford Chambers, King St. Covent Garden, London. 3-10.30pm. Games played include **Empire Builder, Tallsman, Titan, 1830**, and many more.

STOKE-ON-TRENT Wargames Group meets each Friday at 38A Trentham Rd, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent. We have eight rooms permanently set up for gaming and interests run from historical wargames to SF battles to fantasy role-playing. For further details, ☎ Stoke (0783) 615535.

MANORCON PBM September 7-9, 1990 at High Hall, Birmingham University. Boardgames, PBM, computer & role-playing games, competitions, football tournaments and bar. For details write to Peter Calcraft, 13 Royal Mews, Princes St, Dorchester, Dorset ST1 1RL.

BOARDS IN THE FOREST October 26-28 at Wellington Hall, High Beach, just north of London, close to the M25, yet in the heart of Epping Forest. A weekend of boardgames including **HeroQuest, Shogun, World In Flames** and many others. Tea & coffee on tap, food available. £2 per day or £3 both days. Accommodation is available at £5 per night if needed. For full details contact Richard Adams, 212 The Hides, Harlow, Essex CM20 3QT. ☎ 0279 444875.

GAMESCON October 27th at Lalndon Community Centre, Basildon. Contact Chris Baylis, 67 Mynchens, Lee Chapel North, Basildon, Essex SS15 5EG.

MIDCON November 2-4 at the Midland Hotel, Birmingham. Featuring the National Diplomacy championship. Registration £6 to Brian Williams, 30 Rydding Lane, Millfields Estate, West Bromwich, West Midlands B71 2HA. Accommodation £24.50 per night (twin room), £30 (single room).

MINDGAMES 90 November 10 and 11, 1990 at the Novotel in Hammersmith. An international showcase for all types of gaming. Contact Simon Titley/Bridget Seddon, Waltham Business Services, 105a Queen Street, Maldenhead, Berks SL6 1LR. ☎ 0628 770676.

EUROPEAN GENCON 90 November 30th to December 2nd, 1990 at the Holiday Club Pontins, Camber Sands, Nr Rye, Sussex UK. Rolegames and strategy games, fantasy art, miniatures, trade stands. £39.95 for shared room. For further details contact

USA

EAST VALLEY Advanced Squad Leader Club. Contact Pierce Ostrander, 5046 E Decatur St, Mesa, AZ 85205. ☎ 602 985 4505.

HEXAGON SOCIETY meets every first and third Saturday from 10am to 6pm. Contact James McCormack, 1450 Harmon Ave, 224c Las Vegas, NV 89119. ☎ 702 794 3523 (evenings)

HISTORICAL SIMULATIONS SOCIETY of Charlottesville, Virginia meets every Friday at 7pm in New Cabell Hall Rm 236. Contact Derek Croxton, 1711 Galloway Drive, Charlottesville VA 22901 ☎ 804-296 4897.

MIAMI GAMING CLUB seeks new members. All types of games. Meetings are once a week from 7pm to 11pm, Thurs or Fri at 7200 SW 7th St Miami. Contact Rex ☎ 264 9752, or Steve ☎ 271 5418.

NEW ORLEANS GAMES CLUB seeks players for all kinds of games. Contact Greg Schloesser, 3800 Briant Drive, Marrero, LA 70072. ☎ 504 347 7145.

NORTH SHORE GAMES CLUB meets once a month somewhere in Massachusetts. Tournaments, food, and even a newsletter.

PENN-JERSEY GAMERS meet monthly and play most games, but no role-playing. Newsletter, tournaments, raffles. Contact Jim Vroom, 2290 Galloway Rd, A-23, Bensalem, PA 19020.

SANTA FE SPRINGS GAMERS ASSOC. looking for new members to play boardgames and Role-Playing games. Tues/Thurs 5-9pm. Saturdays 9am-5pm. at the Town Centre Hall, 11740 E Telegraph Rd, Santa Fe Springs, CA. ☎ 213 863 4896 (club hours only).

SCHENECTADY WARGAMERS ASSOCIATION: regular meetings and weekend conventions, tournaments of **Axle & Ailles, Empire Builder, Machlavell**. Role-playing too. Contact: Eric Paperman, 418 Vliet Blvd. Cohoes, NY 12047. ☎ 581 237 5874.

WASHINGTON GAMERS ASSOC. meets monthly, and publishes a bimonthly newsletter (\$5 for six issues). Contact Dennis Wang, 2200 Huntington Ave, Alexandria, VA 22303. ☎ 703 960 1259

European Gencon, TSR Limited, 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB.

WOTTACON 91 March 2nd 1991 at Goldsmiths College Hall, New Cross, London SE14. Rolegaming, PBM and Live Role-Playing event. £2.50 for the day. Contact Simon Perryman, 128 Queen Adelaide Court, London SE20 7EB.

BAYCON 91 April 4-8 at the Exeter Court Hotel. Contact Bob Mulholland, 16 Codrington St, Newtown, Exeter EX1 2BU.

GAMESFAIR 91 April 12-14 at Reading University. More details as soon as they are available.

EUROPE

SPIEL 90 October 25-28, 1990 at the Grueghalle, Essen. The biggest, the best, still at the same venue. See ad this issue for more details.

SPIELEFEST 90 November 23-25, Messepalast, Vienna, Austria. Austria's biggest games convention with more than 20 000 visitors.

NORTH AMERICA

GEN CON August 9 to 12, 1990 at the MECCA Convention Center, Milwaukee, Wis. Organised by TSR and featuring the 'world' boardgame championships. Contact 1990 Gen Con Game Fair, PO Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147 USA.

CONVENTION DIARY

MANORCON 90. July 20-23, 1990 at High Hall, Birmingham University. Boardgame convention featuring the National Team Diplomacy Championship and other tournaments. Convention fee £5 or £2 per day. Accommodation available. Contact Richard Walkerdine, 13 Offley Road, Hitchin, Herts SG5 2AZ.

CONJUNCTION. July 27-29, 1990 at New Hall College, Cambridge. Relaxed rolegame convention organised like an SF con rather than a selling exercise. Guest of Honour Greg Stafford. Talks, workshops games etc. £12 attending, B&B £21.50, £5 supporting. Contact Conjunction, c/o 25 Wycliffe Road, Cambridge CB1 3JD.

DRAKCON 90. August 18-19 at the College Dining Room, Northern College of Education, Hilton Drive, Aberdeen, on Saturday 18th from 9am to 11.30pm and on Sunday from 9am to 8.30pm. Games (mainly rolegames) convention which raises money for famine relief. £5 admission (£3.50 under 16s) for both days (£1 reduction for bookings before July 9). £3 for one day (£2 for under 16s). B&B accommodation is available at £10/night. Contact Sandy Douglas, 13 Springbank Terrace, Aberdeen AB1 2LS.

ARENA 90. August 25 1990 at the Addison Centre, Addison Park, Kempston, Beds. Wargames and role-playing convention organised by the Bedford Gladiators in association with the Kempston Fun Day and Kempston Lions and Bedfordshire County Council. Wargames, trade stands, role-playing, boardgames, bring and buy and painting competitions. Admission £2, under 14 £1. Contact Dave Wilkin, ☎ 0234 857394 or Ian Fellows, ☎ 0234 261254.

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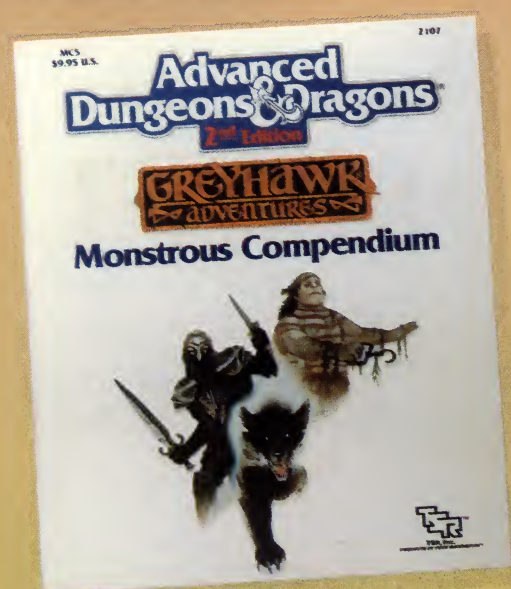
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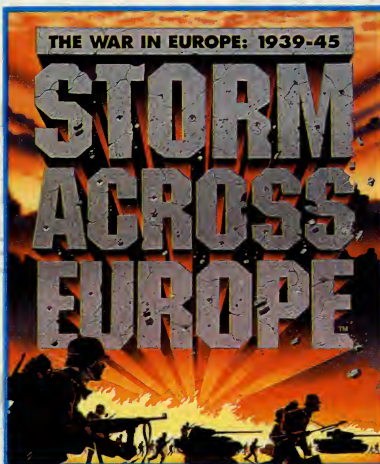
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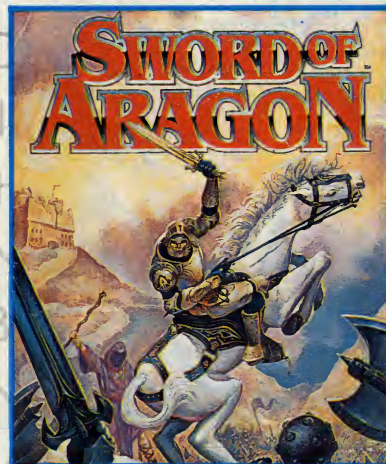
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